METRO / A19

Prosecutor cites many loopholes in Leviste investigation

BUSINESS / B1

DOTC chief '100%' sure Naia 3 to open in late March or early April

WORLD / A22

US publisher of 'Da Vinci Code' printing Pope Benedict's first book

ENTERTAINMENT / D1

Lani on husband Bong's son by another woman: Nobody's perfect

Filipina wins $1-M Qatar Duty Free draw

DADAMI ANG KAMAGANAK NYAN!

A FILIPINO WOMAN WON the $1-million "richest" prize in the Qatar Duty Free draw, Qatar Airways has announced.

Otessa Carbonell Schiapparelli, who lives in Palawan, was in the Qatar

FILIPINA/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, February 1, 2007 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 55 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

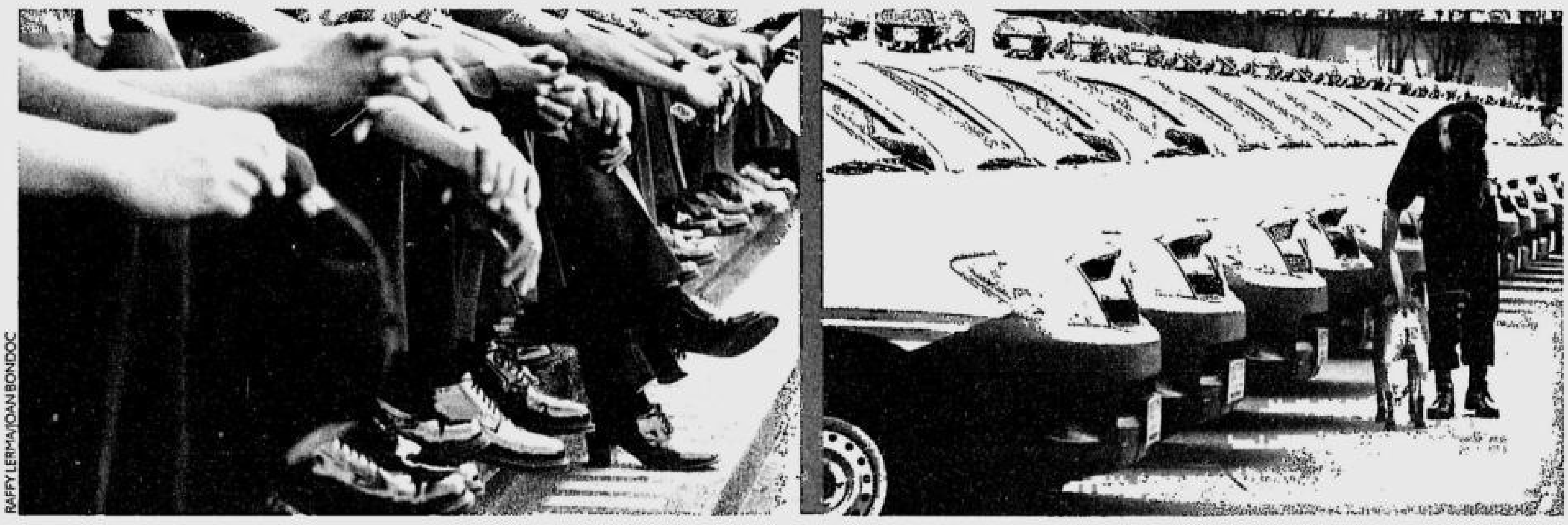
GMA picks Nachura as new SC justice

By Gil Cabacungan

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS PROmoting to the Supreme Court her chief legal representative who unsuccessfully defended her administration in landmark cases brought last year before the Supreme Court.

Interviewed by reporters following the annual vin d'honneur in Malacañang, Chief Justice

GMA/ A4


RAFFY LERMA/JOAN BONDOC

FEMININE TOUCH BREAKS MONOTONY of policemen all in a row as they secure the People Power Monument on Edsa while President Arroyo attends the PNP's 16th anniversary on Wednesday. (Right) Dog sniffers scour the area in Camp Crame where more than 170 police vehicles including troop carriers and patrol cars are waiting to be blessed.

'Garci' ghost hounds Ebdane DND appoinment

By TJ Burgonio and Dona Pazzibugan

THE "HELLO GARCI" GHOST IS LIKELY TO hound newly named Defense Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane when he faces the Commission on Appointments (CA), Senators Rodolfo Biazon and Panfilo Lacson said yesterday.

Ebdane, 58, former chief of the Philippine National Police and currently public works secretary, officially assumes the defense department post during ceremonies in Camp Aguinaldo at 9 a.m. today following his appointment by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

GARCI/ A4

Bin Laden's kin in RP killed

Victims' kin pin hope on UN exec arrival

By Norman Bordadora and Christine O. Avendaño

THE FAMILY MEMBERS OF SLAIN and "disappeared" acdivists yesterday said they would rather meet with the United Nations special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings and summary executions than cooperate with yet another probe team that may be formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Erlinda Cadapan, mother of missing University of the Philippines student Sherlyn Cadapan, said the Families of Desaparecidos would seek an audience with UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston, who is expected to visit the country this month.

"We welcome the visit of Mr. Philip Alston, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings and summary executions who is due to arrive in February," said Ruth Cervantes, public information officer of the human rights group Karapatan.

"We are, however, alarmed by reports that victims of human rights violations are being prevented from meeting with Mr. Alston. We have received information that the National Security

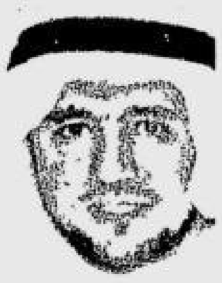
VICTIMS'/ A10

LYN RILLON

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, Papal Nuncio Fernando Filoni, the dean of the diplomatic corps, tells President Arroyo, referring to her initiative to seek the help of int'l groups to probe the political killings at the annual vin d'honneur.

Jamal Khalifa was wanted for financing Abu Sayyaf

DUBAI—A BROTHER-IN-LAW OF OSAMA BIN Laden, who was once wanted in the Philippines and the United States for alleged terror financing, has been killed in Madagascar in what appeared to be a burglary, the victim's brother said yesterday.


KHALIFA: Deep roots in Mindanao

Jamal Khalifa, who was married to a sister of the al-Qaida leader, was killed when gunmen broke into his house in a Madagascar village on Tuesday, his brother Malek Khalifa said in a phone interview from his home in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Philippine police intelligence units have said Khalifa organized Islamic NGOs and a corporation in the country, particularly a branch of the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO) and the Benevolence International Corp. to channel funds to groups like the Abu Sayyaf and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Khalifa was also married to a Filipino woman.

Malek, who was distraught when recounting his brother's death, said 25 to 30 armed men broke into Khalifa's house "while he was sleeping," and killed him.

BIN LADEN'S/ A10

Economy grew 5.4% in '06, missing target due to storms

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY GREW 5.4 PERcent in 2006 from the previous year, boosted by strong exports, dollar inflows from overseas Filipino workers and higher farm production, officials announced yesterday.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said 2006 could have ended better if it had not been for a series of typhoons that battered the country during the last quarter.

Neri said typhoons shaved about 0.4 percentage point off the GDP growth.

The growth, which was measured in terms of the gross domestic product (GDP), fell short of the government's official target of at least 5.5 percent but was better than the 5 percent recorded for 2005.

GDP is the value of all goods and services produced in a country in a given period.

When measured in terms of the gross national product (GNP), the economy rose 6.2 percent in 2006, an improvement from the 5.6 percent posted in 2005, according to the National Statistical Coordination Board. GNP

ECONOMY/ A8

White House climate change cover-up uncovered

WASHINGTON—US SCIENTISTS have been pressured by the White House to tailor their writings on global warming to fit the Bush administration's skepticism, in some cases at the behest of a former oil industry lobbyist, testimony at a congressional hearing on Tuesday showed.

"Our investigations found high-quality science struggling to get out," Francesca Grifo of the watchdog group Union of Concerned Scientists told members of the House committee on oversight and government reform.

A survey by the group found that 150 climate scientists per-

WHITE/ A8

Benguet vegetable farms turn into fields of frost

By Delmar Cariño
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—FARmers can cope with the cold by donning leather jackets and knitted sweaters, but they are helpless against the frost covering vegetable farms in the province.

The cold spell has brought frost to the mountain farms of Barangay Madaymen in Kibungan town, Barangays Cattubo and Paoay in Atok town, and Barangays Natubleng and Sinipsip in Buguias town, damaging ready-to-harvest carrots, cabbages, potatoes and radishes.

Atok, Kibungan and Buguias are the province's major producers of potatoes, lettuce, green peas and cabbage.

Farmers said cabbage heads were covered with up to 5 millimeters of frost, locally called *andap*.

Homer Teliaken, Madaymen Farmers' Association president, and Atok Mayor Concepcion Balao said the vegetable farms in their towns had literally become "fields of frost."

"*Pirmi piman. Madadael nga talaga ti nateng nu tuloy tuloy daytoy* (It's really a bad situation. Vegetables will surely be damaged if this condition continues)," Balao said.

Catalino Calawa, a Madaymen farmer, described to the INQUIRER

BENGUET/ A4

UNO preempts 'Third Force,' announces 8 of 12 candidates

By Tarra Quismundo

AFTER MONTHS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND deliberations, the United Opposition (UNO) yesterday announced "the end of the Third Force" with the near completion of its list of senatorial candidates for the May 14 elections.

UNO officials announced eight of the 12 candidates in a press conference at past 1 p.m., leaving the rest of the slots to "coalition partners."

The lineup is a slightly revised version of the roster earlier released by the opposition's recognized leader, ousted President Joseph Estrada.

"This is the only opposition slate ... In which case, there's no room for a Third Force. With this announcement, we are end-

UNO PREEMPTS/ A8

REM ZAMORA

OPPOSITION'S FIRST 8 bets for the Senate, from left, John Osmeña, JV Ejercito, UNO chair Jojo Binay, UNO spokesperson Ernesto Maceda and Koko Pimentel. Not in photo are Loren Legarda, Panfilo Lacson, Noynoy Aquino, Reps. Alan Cayetano and Francis Escudero.

Second FrontPage

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(All in exact order)

MEGALOTTO 6/45

⑫ ⑬ ⑭ ㉓ ㉗ ㊹

P10,353,193.20

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao and Eastern and Central Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent rains over Eastern Mindanao. The rest of the country will be cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/01/31/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

No blood, no money will flow, GMA vows

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Alcuin Papa

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS promised that blood and public money will not flow during the May elections.

The President vowed this at the traditional New Year reception for the diplomatic community in Malacañang yesterday.

"We will not stand for an election in May disrupted by violence or political intimidation. We will do everything in our power to crack down on political violence leading up to the May elections so that our citizens can vote free from fear," she said in her speech.

Ms Arroyo said the violence had to end "so that our candidates can campaign without the shadow of assassination, so that journalists can cover the election, not their heads, in pursuit of freedom."

History of violence

The President immediately took her message to the Philippine National Police a few hours later when she attended the 16th anniversary celebrations of the police organization.

"One reality that must be resolved is our sad history of political violence. And here once again, the Filipino people are counting on you to safeguard the ballot and clamp down on guns and violence in the run-up to the elections in May," Ms Arroyo said in her speech during the PNP celebrations.

"You and I can tell the people today that one thing will not stand: an election in May disrupted by violence or political intimidation," she said.

At the earlier Palace reception, the President also sought to assuage investors' fears that the coming elections might cause the government to veer away from its prudent fiscal spending in the past two years and deviate from its budget deficit targets.

"Lest anyone falsely declare that we will spend beyond our means before the upcoming election, I've something to say—no way. We have a budget in place and the discipline and political will to stick to it," she said.

"We continue to pay down our deficit and our economic managers are determined to meet their goal of balancing our budget in 2008," she added.

Not fast enough

In her Malacañang speech, Ms Arroyo admitted for the first time that reforms have not moved fast enough to narrow the gap between the rich and poor.

"With all of our dreams come the day-to-day realities that change and reform never move fast enough. Disparities exist that are hard to witness. There are too many poor, too many sick, too many without a job. I wish I could just make the process move forward to slow down and eventually halt the inequalities," she said.

Recent survey results have shown that poverty continues to persist despite economic gains such as the strong peso, the robust stock market and soaring investments.

The PNP anniversary was marked by simple and austere rites at Camp Crame's Multi-Purpose Hall. In previous years, the celebrations have been held in the PNP Grandstand and were invariably marked by a parade.

'Free from fear'

In statements echoing her message earlier that day before the diplomats, the President told the PNP that it was their duty to ensure that citizens are able to vote safely and freely.

Ms Arroyo last week ordered a crackdown on private armies in such political hotspots as Abra where the governor has been implicated in the murder of the province's representative in Congress.

The job of ensuring security during the polls has fallen on the PNP after the Commission on Elections and the Armed Forces signed an agreement late last year to relieve the military of its traditional elections peacekeeping duties.

The agreement was an offshoot of the alleged involvement of certain military generals in the so-called "Hello Garci" controversy.

PNP Chief Dir. Gen. Oscar Calderon said the PNP will have to "ensure the conduct of an honest, orderly, peaceful and credible elections this coming May."

He warned the 118,000-strong police force to stay out of politics.

The PNP has Task Force HOPE (Honest, Orderly, Peaceful Elections) to make sure the polls are peaceful.

Mission to Munich no junket, solons say

By Michael Lim Ubac

HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER Prospero Nograles defended the fact-finding mission sent to Munich to verify allegations of a bank account being held in a German bank by the First Family amid taunts from opposition representatives that the trip was just an excuse for a junket.

Nograles praised the three members of the team—Representatives Roberto Cajes of Bohol, Antonio Cerilles of Zamboanga del Sur and Alagad party-list Rep. Rodante Marcoleta—who "braved the winter season in Germany just to ascertain the truth."

Opposition members of the House ethics committee which authorized the trip refused to join it. Neither did the First Family's accuser, Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano, who said the "fishing expedition" was useless without a waiver from Arroyo family members to authorize the opening of any alleged accounts of the First Family.

"We're even doing him [Cayetano] a favor," said Nograles of Cayetano, who is facing an expulsion case before the House ethics committee for accusing the family of President Macapagal-Arroyo of maintaining a multi-million dollar account in the Bayersiche Hypo und Vereins Bank in Munich.

Fact-finding

Nograles said Cayetano failed to substantiate his accusations against the Arroyos, hence the need to send a fact-finding panel to Munich.

The committee authorized the trip to verify the allegations in order to help it decide the expulsion case against Cayetano filed by First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, his son Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo and his brother, Rep. Ignacio Arroyo.

Administration Representatives Mauricio Domogan of Baguio City, Benasing Macarambon of Lanao del Sur and Eladio Jala of Bohol hailed the "statesmanship" of the mission members.

"What junket are they talking about?" said Jala, noting that the team would be coming "face-to-face" with officials of the HypoVereins Bank to "find out the truth directly from them."

"This is the moment of truth and the opposition is clearly avoiding it, hence their absence from the probe panel," said Jala.

No cover-up

Jala pointed out that the Germans were strict about their banking rules and policies and would not participate in any cover-up.

"Rep. Cayetano's accusations are also a serious matter for them, because he also accused them of having participated in the money laundering of hidden wealth. That's why the HypoVereinsbank officials are meeting with the probe panel, so they can also clear their bank's name," he said.

Domogan said sending the fact-finding panel was part of the due process accorded to Cayetano.

"He refused to accept the bank officials' certification presented by the First Gentleman, thus the ethics committee went the extra mile for him by going to Munich to validate the certifications' veracity, and to check whether or not the First Gentleman's family ever had an account there," said Domogan.

Bishop says there's no need for poll summit

THERE IS NO NEED FOR THE four-party summit for honest elections being called by President Macapagal-Arroyo, according to the president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo said the parties concerned should instead "make a promise to God and with an honest conscience" that they would help ensure honest and orderly elections in May.

"If all are committed to that, it is not necessary to have a summit," the Iloilo archbishop said in a statement.

"Let each do that and just that—ensuring and working for clean, honest, and orderly elections, which means avoiding violence, deceit and cheating of every kind," he said.

The President proposed last Tuesday that the CBCP, the Commission on Elections, private election watchdogs, and the Philippine National Police meet in a summit to discuss plans to ensure clean and fair elections in May.

Lagdameo said he was "skeptical" about the President's proposal for a multi-party talk, noting that the Comelec, the election watchdogs, the PNP, and the political parties were "already governed by the same law on clean, honest, and orderly elections."

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Senate approves bill to cut medicine prices

By TJ Burgonio

THE SENATE YESTERDAY APPROVED ON third and final reading a key legislation amending the country's Intellectual Property Code to bring down the cost of medicines and make them more accessible to the poor.

The senators voted 20 nil to pass Senate Bill 2263, which President Macapagal-Arroyo has certified as urgent, after months of debate.

After it is signed by President, the new law will lead to an "era" where Filipinos are able to buy medicines at the comparably low prices for which they sell in Thailand, India, Japan and other countries, according to Sen. Manuel Roxas II, who authored the bill.

"This is the first step toward promoting competition in the local pharmaceutical market to increase people's access and will lead to lower prices of medicine to ensure our people's health," said Roxas as he thanked his colleagues for the bipartisan support for the bill.

The House of Representatives is still debating its version of the bill. Once this is approved, the two chambers will convene a bicameral conference committee to reconcile the two versions.

Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. said the new legislation to bring down the cost of medicines should go hand in hand with an increase in the budget of the Department of Health for it to adequately fund health programs.

The bill seeks to amend the Intellectual Property Code to allow the parallel importation of patented medicines; the early development of patented medicines; and the exemption of government importation, manufacture, sale or distribution of medicines from restrictions, among others.

It also seeks to prohibit the issuance of another patent for new uses of a substance that has already been patented.

During committee hearings on the bill, health advocates pointed out that the protection given by the Code to drug patent holders had resulted in a "significant imbalance" between supply and demand of drugs, according to Sen. Pia Cayetano, the bill's co-author.

In 2002, multinationals dominated the industry, taking 83 percent of market revenue share in the P85-billion medical drugs industry. The drug firms attributed the high prices of their medicines to the high cost of developing a patent, or the official legal right given to a company to make or sell a product for a particular number of years.

Smaller Filipino pharmaceutical companies contend that local intellectual property laws are designed to favor the patents of multinationals.

Of the 191 patents filed from 2001 to 2004, 89 percent are foreign patents, while the rest are local, according to Cayetano.

The new law amends Section 72.1 of the Code by scrapping the prevailing "domestic exhaustion principle" in the country in favor of the "doctrine of international exhaustion of intellectual property rights."

Under an international exhaustion regime, once a product has been introduced anywhere in the world by the patent owner, anyone may import this for resale in Manila without the risk of patent infringement, according to Roxas.

This amendment will allow the parallel importation of medicines so that anyone, whether an individual or a trader, can buy them "beyond our shores for better prices," he said.

GMA declares Feb. 22-25 'Edsa Week'

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS DEclared February 22 to 25 of every year as "Edsa People Power Commemoration Week."

Proclamation No. 1224, which the President issued on Tuesday, underscored the need to "highlight the values and principles" of the people power revolution through its yearly commemoration.

Malacañang asked all government agencies, civil society organizations, professional and religious organizations, the mass media and the citizenry to join in all commemoration activities and programs of the Edsa People Power Commission and the Spirit of Edsa Foundation and other private sector groups.

"All provincial governments are also hereby enjoined to actively participate in the yearly commemoration activities from Feb. 22 to 24, in coordination with the Edsa People Power Commission, with the widest media coverage possible."

The first people power came about in 1986 when the people toppled the government of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and installed Corazon Aquino as his successor.

House bill to penalize turncoats

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTAtives has passed on second reading the proposed Political Party Act which, if enacted, will ban turncoatism and subsidize political parties and candidates for elective posts.

Speaker Jose de Venecia yesterday called on the Senate to approve its own version of the bill, authored by Sen. Edgardo Angara, in time for the May elections.

"This will dramatically reduce money politics in the country, reduce corruption and at the same time ... begin the modernization of political parties, whether you have a parliamentary or presidential system," said De Venecia in an interview.

The initial subsidy is pegged at P500 million, said the Speaker, principal author of the measure.

De Venecia, national president of the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats party, had previously authored an earlier version of the bill which the House passed in 2002 but it was shelved when the Senate did not craft a similar measure.

He explained that House Bill 5877, which was passed on Monday, would discourage turncoatism, or the penchant of politicians to change political parties at the drop of a hat.

HB 5877, which is a substitute bill of 10 proposed measures, is aimed at strengthening the country's political party system by institutionalizing national parties and the adherence to and development of party platforms; institutionalizing reforms in the financing of electoral campaigns; and instilling party loyalty and discipline. *Michael Lim Ubac*

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Lyn Ching – Pascual, 34
Smart and sassy mom

Always on the go, Lyn makes sure that she never runs out of quality time for her daughter and husband Jappy. Lyn wants to do things fast under a pretty much organized schedule. In fact, her fast-paced lifestyle is the same reason that brought her closer to Marie France's Ultrashape. She says, "With Ultrashape, all I have to do is walk in, lie down for about an hour while undergoing my treatment and drive my way back to work again. I can even take phone calls or read some magazines even while I'm at it. The best part was, I could feel my tummy flatten only after a few weeks! A friend of mine who also tried Ultrashape immediately lost 2 inches in just one month! Ultrashape is not just fast and easy, it delivers excellent results as well!"

Cristina Gonzalez – Romualdez, 42
Posh and classic mom

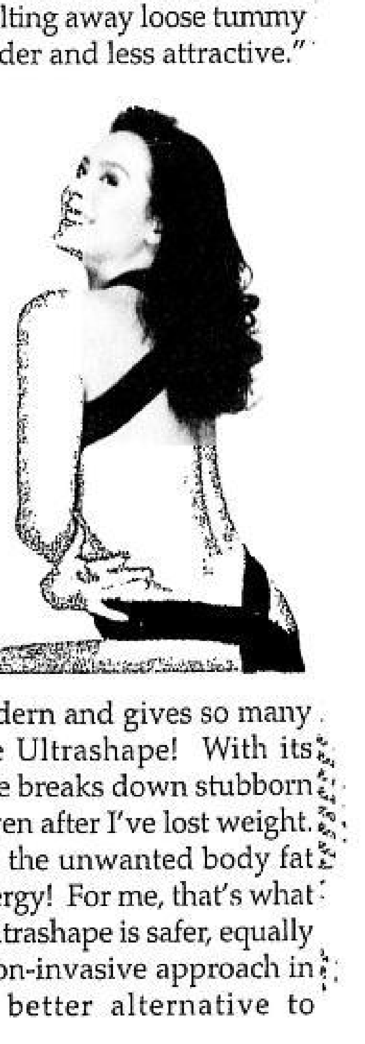
Despite the busy nature of her catering business, Cristina prefers spending most of her quality time in Tacloban where time moves slowly. It is where she best personifies calm and domesticity while still donning a classy, graceful image.

She states, "I love my life in the province. Strolling along the beach, wearing simple dresses and enjoying the serenity of the place with my family. It strips me off the frills and stresses from work and city life. If I overindulge in good food because of the relaxing environment, all I have to do is to have my tummy flattened by Ultrashape. Just like my preference for comfort, Ultrashape requires no drastic surgeries and harmful side-effects. It doesn't require complicated diets and it leaves no ugly scars. It's a very convenient, simple and risk-free method to re-sculpt the body by melting away loose tummy fat that makes one look and feel older and less attractive."

Dawn Zulueta–Lagdameo, 37
Glam and modern mom

Dawn is no doubt devoted and hands-on with her son Jacobo. But during her spare time, she indulges on her penchant for stylish shoes, fashionable clothes, costume parties and her ipod music collection. Her chic and cosmopolitan taste with just about everything makes her an exciting, contemporary mom. For Dawn, it's always an advantage to be up-to-date.

"Even with my slimming option, I go for the one that's modern and gives so many benefits at the same time – like Ultrashape! With its ultrasound technology, Ultrashape breaks down stubborn fats that are left inside my body even after I've lost weight. What's good is, it metabolizes all the unwanted body fat so it can be converted to useful energy! For me, that's what makes liposuction unnecessary. Ultrashape is safer, equally hi-tech yet just as effective. Its non-invasive approach in body contouring makes it a better alternative to liposuction!," Dawn explains.



This year, give yourself a slimmer, sexier body. Forget about liposuction, excruciating diets and tiring workouts! If you are still left troubled with some stubborn fats that just won't go away even after going through your crash diets, rigid workouts or even a surgical procedure, schedule yourself for an Ultrashape treatment right away! It promises an average reduction of about 2cm in just one treatment – without the risks and side-effects, surgical scars and downtime! Call Marie France now at 894-BODY (2639).

ADVT

GMA picks Nachura as new SC justice

From page A1

Reynato Puno said the President had told him that she had-picked Solicitor General Antonio Eduardo Nachura to fill up a vacant high court seat.

Asked if Nachura would be named to the Supreme Court, Puno said: "Yes. That is per the information coming from the President."

Nachura did not reply to the INQUIRER's calls.

Puno also disclosed that the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel chief Agnes Devanadera, who was reportedly on the short list of nominees to the Supreme Court, would be named as the new solicitor general.

"I understand it will be the government corporate counsel but she (the President) has not extended the formal appointment," said Puno when asked who would replace Nachura.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita refused to comment on Puno's revelation, stressing that he had yet to see the President's appointment papers.

Nachura spent more than a year as chief presidential legal counsel and is now 10 months on the job as solicitor general.

Landmark cases

Nachura had a big hand in crafting Presidential Proclamation No. 1017 which placed the country under a state of national emergency for a week in February 2006 to allow Ms Arroyo to consolidate her military base and defeat coup plotters.

While the high tribunal last year upheld the President's prerogative in declaring an emergency, it declared illegal her actions to carry out the proclamation.

Nachura represented the government in the Supreme Court hearings on two highly disputed presidential directives—Executive Order No. 464, which barred Cabinet and military officials from testifying in Congress without the President's consent, and the calibrated preemptive response policy on antigovernment protests.

The magistrates thumbed down the two measures.

Nachura is also one of the leading lights in moves to amend the Charter through a people's initiative, which was also rejected by the Supreme Court last year.

NACHURA lost cases of Palace executive orders at Supreme Court.

Asked about Nachura's appointment, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said: "That was expected. I'm all behind that also. I think he should be there."

Gonzalez also said he did not think there were any more cases pending before the Supreme Court where Nachura would be asked to inhibit himself.

Said Court of Appeals Presiding Justice Ruben Reyes, a contender for the Supreme Court vacancy: "We have no objection to that although the CA justices unanimously wished it would be someone from the Court of Appeals. Anyway, there's bright prospect for the next appointee to the SC to come from the CA."

Reyes, who turns 68 this month, also said a Judicial and Bar Council rule prescribing an age limit for candidates to the Supreme Court should be amended so that some justices, including him, could qualify for appointment in the next vacancy. The JBC nominates candidates to fill vacancies in the judiciary.

Reyes said that under the current JBC rules, nominees who come from the court should at least have two years remaining in the service.

Gonzalez, a member of the JBC council, said: "I have no objection to that provided that a minimum of one year service will still be available. I will object if for example you promote somebody who has only two months to go. I think that's unfair to the government." *With a report from Leila B. Salaverria*

GMA names 40-year veteran as OIC of DPWH

THE MAN NOW AT THE HELM of the Department of Public Works and Highways is a 40-year veteran who rose from the ranks.

Manuel Bonoan, 61, was undersecretary at the DPWH prior to his appointment yesterday as its officer in charge. He started working as a civil engineering aide at the then Bureau of Public Highways in 1967, when he was still a senior at the Mapua Institute of Technology.

Bonoan, 61, yesterday told the INQUIRER that he would focus on the construction and improvement of roads and infrastructure in the "super regions" that President Macapagal-Arroyo identified in her State of the Nation Address last year.

"We will pursue relentlessly the projects in the department vital to the economy and the development of the country, especially in the four super regions," he said in a phone interview.

Bonoan said he would continue the DPWH campaign against illegal and hazardous billboards. The campaign was jump-started after Typhoon "Milenyo" slammed into the country on Sept. 28, 2006, causing the collapse of a number of billboards in Metro Manila, including one in Makati City, that killed one person.

He said he would also keep up the monitoring of public buildings to ensure their structural soundness and capacity to withstand strong earthquakes. The DPWH has a Task Force on Building Inspection to check on the buildings.

Bonoan was appointed assistant secretary for planning in 1987, and as undersecretary in 1994.

He holds a graduate diploma in highway engineering from the University of South Wales in Sydney, Australia.

He is married with two children and is a licensed civil engineer and environmental planner. *Leila B. Salaverria*

Ebdane says he'll court support of soldiers

By Alcuin Papa

NEWLY APPOINTED DEFENSE Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane yesterday said he would try to bond with soldiers, including junior officers who are reportedly against him.

"I can shoot with them, I can jump with them, I can dive with them. Of course, only in a sport competition," Ebdane told reporters during the Philippine National Police 16th anniversary celebrations in Camp Crame.

Ebdane was commander of the PNP's elite Special Action Force before he became PNP chief. Among specializations that the SAF commander should master are marksmanship, airborne and seaborne operations.

Ebdane led the SAF in the battle against rebel soldiers in the 1989 coup attempt.

He said he knew how to court the approval of the soldiers. "(It) will be taken care of. Anyway, I know what to do. I think it's not that hard. Maybe I just need to exercise again," Ebdane joked.

Reward for loyalty

He also said he considered his new job as a "challenge" and an "opportunity for me to prove I am worthy."

Ebdane evaded questions about his appointment being a reward for his loyalty to President Macapagal-Arroyo. "Oh no, not again," he laughed.

He also refused to comment on the Feliciano Commission's recommendations that a civilian be made defense secretary instead of a military man and the report of the Melo Commission implicating members of the military in the alleged killings of leftists.

"The President has full confidence in Secretary Ebdane," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Bunye said claims that Ebdane protected former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano during the "Hello Garci" controversy were "all insinuations" and that he did not want to "dignify the allegations."

Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon said that it would be easy to work with Ebdane since they shared the same first name and nickname.

"I have worked under General Ebdane. We went to intelligence school together. I know his capacity and capabilities," Esperon said.

He urged those in the ranks objecting to Ebdane's appointment to "wait and see how Secretary Ebdane would work. Let's not prejudge him."

'Garci' ghost hounds Ebdane ...

From page A1

Ms Arroyo, who served as acting defense secretary after her former chief legal counsel Avelino Cruz Jr. suddenly resigned last Nov. 30, has sent word that Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita would preside over the turnover.

"He's carrying a baggage," said Biazon. "This is the HGG: Hello Garci ghost. Remember he was mentioned in the Hello Garci [tape]," said the chair of the Senate committee on defense that held hearings on the scandal last year.

"I'm very sure that some elements in the commission will be raising these questions," said Biazon.

Lacson said that Ebdane would have to explain his role in the scandal, which suggested a conspiracy between Ms Arroyo and then Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to rig the results of the 2004 presidential vote. Ms Arroyo has denied any wrongdoing.

"It's tainted to say the least," said Lacson of the vote, "owing to his (Garcillano's) alleged participation in the 2004 election fraud. So we can see she (Ms Arroyo) is not really sincere in her call for a credible and honest elections come May 2007," he told reporters.

Ebdane has flatly denied charges linking him to poll cheating and the disappearance of Garcillano at the height of the wiretapping scandal in 2005. There were widespread speculations that Ebdane was in charge of Garcillano's movements and security when he allegedly went into hiding.

Needs confirmation

Lacson said that Ebdane could not perform his job until he was confirmed by the CA, pointing out that he wasn't even confirmed on his appointment as Public Works Secretary.

"Since she appointed Ebdane not in ad interim capacity, he cannot perform his duty unless confirmed by the CA. Again, the executive department has the propensity to violate the Constitution in this regard," he said.

Both Lacson and Biazon, however, vouched for Ebdane's competence to assume his new post.

"Setting aside all these controversies, personally I believe he is competent enough; he's qualified for the job. He worked under me; he was one of the members of my directorial staff as chief PNP," Lacson said, recalling his stint as national police chief during the Estrada administration.

Military character

Ebdane's appointment also seals the military character of the current Department of National Defense (DND) leadership. With Ebdane at the helm, the department will now be run by five former generals and a former aide to a military officer.

Among them is Ernesto Carolina, a former Army general who was Ebdane's classmate at the Philippine Military Academy Class 1970.

Carolina has been appointed defense undersecretary for civilian, veterans and reserve affairs.

The other defense undersecretaries are Antonio Santos, a former Army general who handles defense affairs; Ricardo Blancaflor, a former antiterrorism task force head and chief of staff of former Sen. Gregorio Honasan, who oversees legal and special concerns; Ariston Delos Reyes, a former Navy vice admiral who oversees internal affairs; and Mateo Mayuga, a former Navy chief who oversees modernization affairs.

Under the reorganization order which Ms Arroyo issued last Dec. 31, Santos, Carolina and Blancaflor are regular undersecretaries.

Delos Reyes and Mayuga were appointed as presidential assistants who are seconded to the DND as undersecretaries.

Ms Arroyo also named five assistant secretaries and two executive staff officers.

GMA's last meeting

Ms Arroyo presided over her last meeting as concurrent defense chief yesterday in Camp Aguinaldo.

She was briefed by top DND officials and the Armed Forces of the Philippines top brass about the progress of the fast-tracked acquisition of P7.49 billion worth of military hardware. *(Story on Page A9.)*

The bidding will be held this February and the contracts are expected to be awarded by March, officials said.

"I'm still the secretary of national defense until the end of office hours today," Ms Arroyo laughed as she parried questions about Ebdane's appointment.

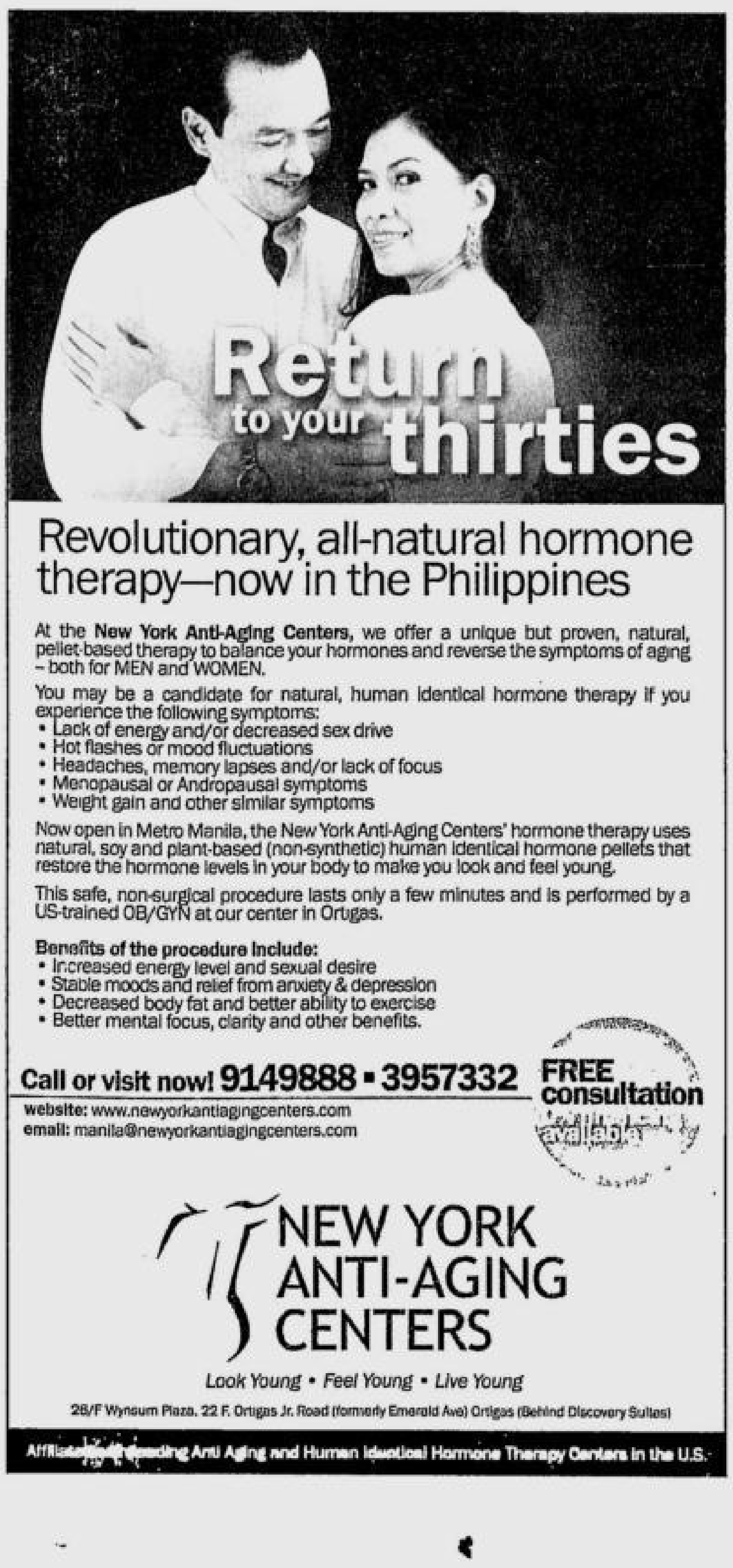
Palace officials, however, announced that Ebdane had indeed been appointed.

Civilian defense head

Before he left, Cruz said he hoped that his successor would also come from the civilian sector in order to continue the reforms he laid down under the long-term Philippine Defense Reform.

The Davide and Feliciano Commissions, which looked into the causes of military uprisings, separately arrived at the conclusion that reforms in the military, regarded as one of the worst equipped in Asia, stand a chance under a civilian defense chief.

"Beyond the need to institutionalize the supremacy of civilian authority over the military, the appointment of persons who have not had long and deep ties to the military and who have not held positions in the military establishment that itself needs to be reformed, is essential if a reform program is to succeed," the Feliciano Commission has said.



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Benguet vegetable farms turn into fields of frost

From page A1

how the vegetable farms looked like on Wednesday morning in the first frost attack this year.

"Thick white ice [sheets] have dominated the farms. The ice clung to the plants and occupied even the ground between farm plots. Water from 'rain birds' flows like ice and shakes the frost on the vegetable plants," he said.

Rain birds

"Rain birds" (or rain bursts) is how farmers call their overhead irrigation sprinklers.

Room temperatures on the farms have dropped to 5 degrees Celsius, according to Calawa.

Coldest in three years

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) in Baguio City reported temperatures continually dropping this week—10.6 degrees Celsius on Monday, 9.6 degrees Celsius on Tuesday and 9 degrees Celsius on Wednesday.

The temperature recorded at 5 a.m. Wednesday in Baguio was the coldest in three years.

Efren Dalipog, Pagasa weather observer, said the last time the mercury dropped to 9 degrees Celsius in Baguio was in December 1983.

The temperature also dropped to 8 degrees Celsius on Jan. 18, 2003.

Over the past five days, Kibungan has experienced an unusually cold weather, said Renette Mayamnes, the town agriculturist. She said Wednesday was the coldest.

Agriculturists alerted

Frost has begun to blanket vegetable farms in Barangays Sinipsip and Natubleng on Wednesday, according to Buguias Mayor Thomas Palileng.

Teliaken said many farmers expected the frost to hit their farms on Wednesday morning following the cold Tuesday night that made Madaymen villagers use four to five blankets each.

Kibungan Mayor Murphy Paayas, Palileng and Balao have alerted their respective town agriculturists to monitor the cold spell.

Joseph Rios, chief meteorological officer of Pagasa's Baguio station, said the agency was ill-equipped to predict how long the cold spell would last.

But he said prolonged temperatures below 10 degrees Celsius would give way to frost.

Drizzle, strong winds

On Tuesday, Balao and Paayas said farmers were not yet worried about frost because there was a drizzle and strong winds blew across the farms.

Frost is unlikely to occur when strong winds blow and when there is rain, according to Balao.

Lolita Bentres, provincial agriculturist, said it was still early to assess the damage caused by the frost.

After a week or less, the appearance of the vegetables would show if they were damaged, she said.

"The vegetables are considered damaged when they are no longer green and appear burned and wilted," Bentres said.

She asked the farmers to harvest ripe vegetables to avoid frost damage. *With a report from Gobleth Moulic, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Filipina wins $1-M Qatar Duty Free ...

From page A1

capital of Doha to collect her winning check from Qatar Duty Free deputy general manager Krishna Kumari, according to a media release of Qatar Airways. Schiapparelli flew in from Manila for the special event, it said.

"I couldn't believe it, I was in total shock, it was just amazing to receive such wonderful news!" Schiapparelli was reportedly quoted as saying. "What an excellent Christmas present!"

She was informed of her windfall when she received a telephone call from Kumari at the time of the draw last December at the Doha International Airport.

Schiapparelli bought her winning ticket before boarding Qatar Airways' Flight QR644 from Doha to Manila last year.

She said the money "would give her family financial security for the rest of their life." She is married, with an 11-year-old daughter, Qatar Airways said.

Qatar Duty Free, a subsidiary of Qatar Airways, launched the US Dollar Millionaire Raffle draw in May last year. Chances of winning were "extremely high" as each draw is made after 5,000 tickets are sold.

"The beauty of this draw is that it is not restricted to just one prize," Kumari was quoted in the release as saying.

Raffle tickets, priced at QAR950 ($261) each, may be purchased by departing passengers and those on transit at the Doha airport.

Qatar Duty Free and Qatar Airways chief executive officer Akbar Al Baker said the $1-million draw was the biggest ever cash prize in the history of the company and in Qatar.

The draw was launched three years ago with the prize money then at QAR1 million ($280,000).

This year, the prize was increased to $1 million.

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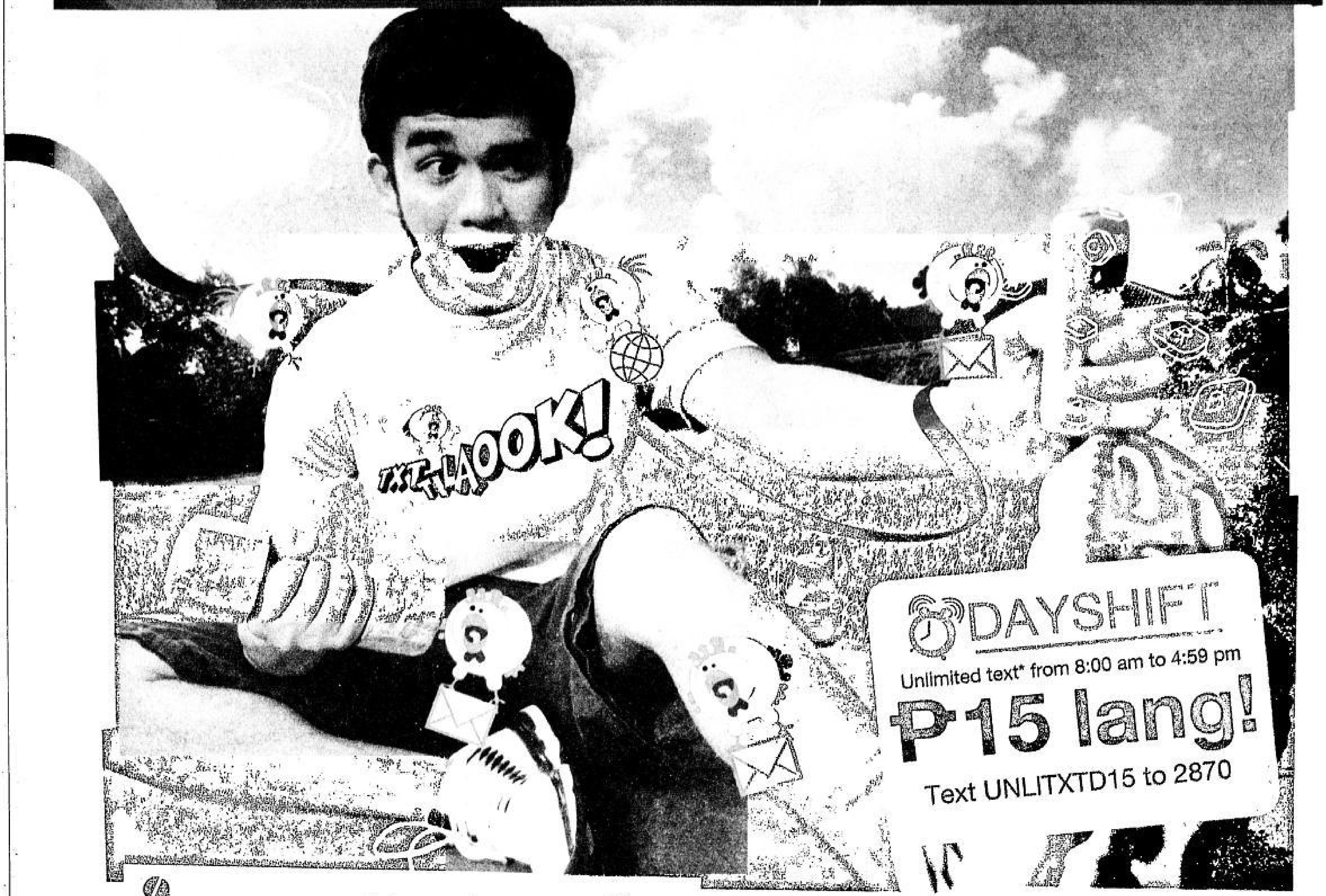
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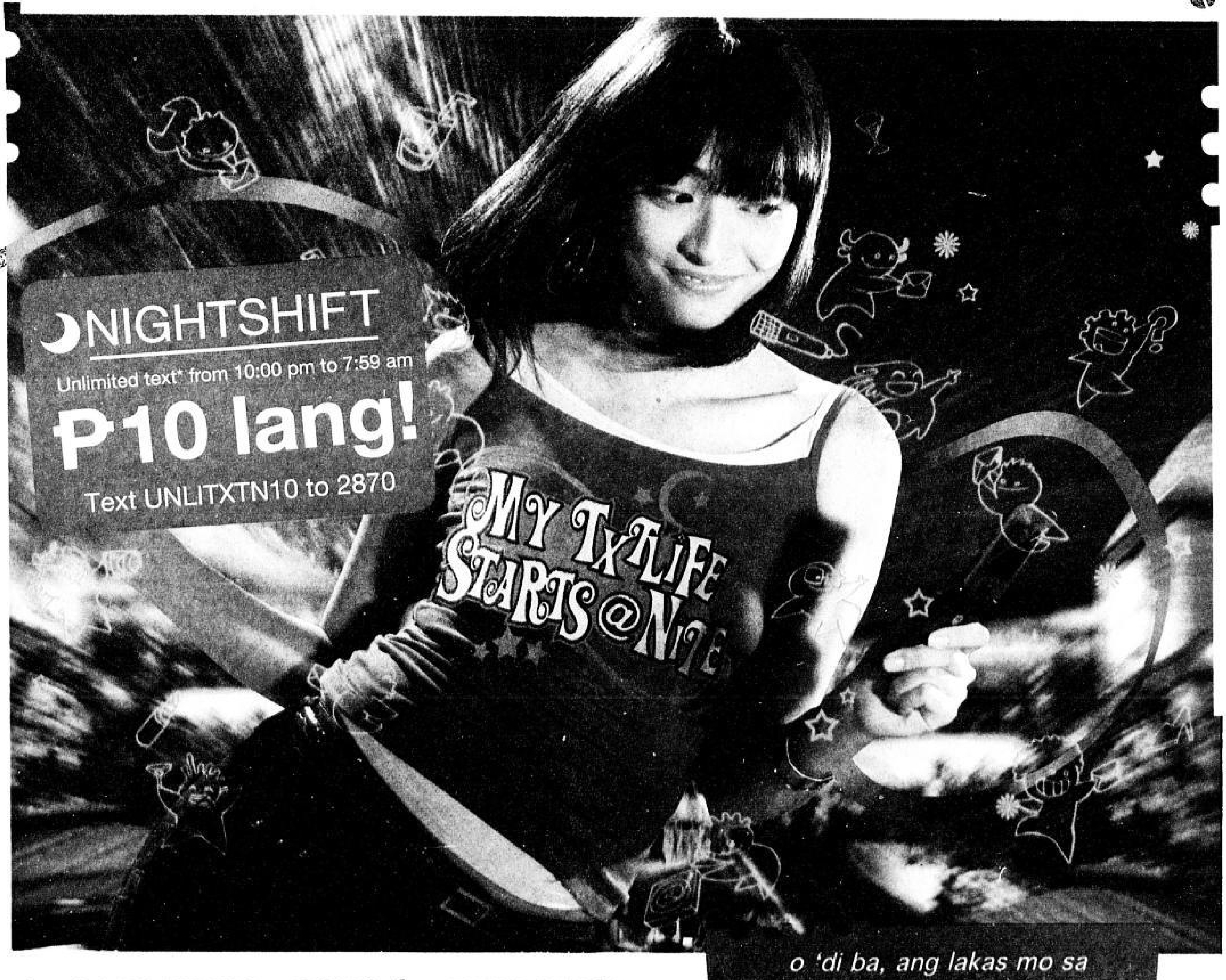

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SC junks eviction appeal of Fort Boni residents

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS denied the appeal of some 20,000 families residing inside Fort Bonifacio to stop their eviction from the former military camp by the Bases Conversion Development Authority and the Taguig City government.

The high tribunal upheld the authority of the BCDA and the Taguig administration to eject members of the Samahan ng Masang Pilipino sa Makati,. Inc. (SMPMI) from Fort Bonifacio because they were shown to be professional squatters.

SMPMI, who said its members were some 20,000 families, earlier asked the SC to issue a temporary restraining order and injunction to prevent the BCDA and the Taguig administration from demolishing their houses built on a disputed Fort Bonifacio lot.

The SC said that in the first place, the disputed lot belongs to the BCDA and the SMPMI has no claim over it.

"On the other hand, SMPMI has not presented any title or deed to demonstrate any ownership or any interest in the subject lots," it said.

The court also said some of SMPMI's members should not have been there in the first place.

"While concededly there is no finding that petitioner's members are professional squatters, yet, as we mentioned above, the evidence presented before us tend to show that the affected members of petitioner SMPMI are professional squatters who have sufficient income for legitimate housing but have illegally occupied the subject lots without the consent of the government or the eventual owner, the BCDA," the SC said.

It added that the BCDA was able to show that the structures it demolished were new ones and were made of cement and other strong materials that cost a lot of money. Thus, the house owners have the financial capacity to build their own houses.

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'Dark horse' is new PAF chief

By Nikko Dizon

THE "DARK HORSE" EMERGED the chosen one.

Maj. Gen. Horacio Tolentino, the current Armed Forces Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (J-1), will be the next commanding general of the Philippine Air Force (PAF).

Tolentino will succeed Lt. Gen. Jose Reyes, who is set to retire on Friday.

At 55, Tolentino, a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class 1974, will serve as PAF commanding general for only a year.

Tolentino was chosen over his PMA mistah, Maj. Gen. Pedro Ike Inserto, the PAF commander for Air Education and Training Command based in Fernando Air Base in Lipa, Batangas, and Maj. Gen. Pedrito Cadungog, of PMA Class 1975, who heads the 250th Presidential Airlift Wing.

Inserto is set to retire in 2009 while Cadungog, in 2010.

Air Force sources said that since last year, it was Inserto, and then Cadungog, who had been drummed up to be Reyes' successor.

"But Gen. Tolentino is a good choice," sources told the INQUIRER yesterday following the announcement of Tolentino's appointment.

The sources, who requested anonymity for lack of authority to speak to the media, described Tolentino as a "tireless, unassuming, and quiet worker."

"He's not one to hog the headlines. *Hindi rin siya ma-pulitika* (He's also apolitical)," one of the sources said.

In separate interviews, the INQUIRER sources noted that Tolentino could put his experience in heading personnel departments as he assumes the helm of the PAF.

Among the issues Tolentino will face is the exodus of the Air Force pilots to commercial airlines.

The question, the sources noted, is inevitable: What can the new PAF commanding general do in a year?

"*Mas maganda kung ang uupo, magtatagal para makita ang takbo ng programa nya.* (It's better if the one who will sit will stay longer so he can see the progress of his program). But apparently, the leadership does not subscribe to this," one of the sources said, adding: "We would see the revolving door policy until such time that the proposal is passed."

The source was referring to the Revised National Defense Act that requires a three-year minimum term for the Armed Forces Chief of Staff and a two-year minimum term for heads of the major service commands.

A son of a retired air force soldier who served in the PAF engineering unit in Northern Luzon, Tolentino grew up at the Enlisted Personnel Housing Area inside Villamor Air Base.

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Judicial and Bar Council announces that the following are applicants for different judgeship positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC): (NCJR) – MANILA: (Brs. 5,11,37,38,40 & 42) ACOSTA, Louis P.; **AGOR**, Dominador A.; **ARCEGA**, Wilhelmina M.; **ARQUELADA**, Dominador L.; **BAUTISTA**, Jose L. Jr.; **CALIS**, Elpidio R.; **CAPELLAN**, Mario B.; **ILAO**, Toribio E. Jr.; **ITURRALDE**, Philbert I.; **LINDO**, Francisco S.; **LORREDO**, Jorge Emmanuel M.; **MACARAIG**, Virgilio V.; **MACATAÑGAY**, Esther P.; **MANGROBANG**, Ma. Celestina C.; **MANTALA**, Apollo S.; **QUITAIN**, Eutiquio L.; **RUIZ**, Joseph Cedrick O.; **SINGH**, Maria Filomena D.; **SISON**, Dionisio C.; **SOLUREN**, Corazon D.; **SULLA**, Petronilo A. Jr.; **UMALI**, Alberico B.; **QUEZON CITY: (Brs. 80, 85 & 106) AGBADA**, Genie G.; **AGUILAR**, Narciso M.; **ALZATE**, Laureano T.; **ARCEGA**, Wilhelmina M.; **ARENAS**, Santiago M.; **ARQUELADA**, Dominador L.; **BAUTISTA**, Jose L. 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Jr.; **UMALI**, Alberico B.; **VELASCO**, Armando C.; **ZULUETA**, Jose R. **PASIG CITY: (Brs.67,70,166 & 167) ACOSTA**, Louis P.; **ALZATE**, Laureano T.; **ARCEGA**, Wilhelmina M.; **ARENAS**, Santiago M.; **CALIS**, Elpidio R.; **CAPELLAN**, Mario B.; **CEZAR**, Amorfina C.; **DELA CRUZ**, Eugenio G.; **ILAO**, Toribio E. Jr.; **LIGAYA**, Merinnisa O.; **LINDO**, Francisco S.; **MACATAÑGAY**, Esther P.; **MANTALA**, Apollo S.; **MAÑALAC**, Mary Ann C.; **MISLANG**, Rolando G.; **RUIZ**, Joseph Cedrick O.; **SAN GABRIEL**, Ma. Teresa C.; **SOLUREN**, Corazon D.; **SULLA**, Petronilo A. Jr.; **UMALI**, Alberico B.; **YANGA**, Armando A.

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT (MTC): (REGION XI) – LAAK COMPOSTELA VALLEY: MACASA, Conrado O.

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC): (REGION XI) – NORALA-T'BOLI-STO. NIÑO, SOUTH COTABATO: CORDERO, Francisco J. Jr.

The public may submit sworn complaint, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants not later than February 10, 2007 to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, Centennial Bldg., P. Faura, Manila (Tel. 552-95-12; Fax 552-9598; e-mail address **jbc@supremecourt.gov.ph; jbc_supremecourt@yahoo.com.ph**).

January 30, 2007.

MaLVillarama
MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court &
Ex-Officio Secretary

(PDI–Feb. 1, 2007)

Corrections

IN THE JAN. 30 issue, a front-page story—"Loren, Chiz spurn Palace offer of slots in 'Team Unity'"—misquoted Sen. Edgardo Angara, leader of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, as saying that his differences with Sen. Panfilo Lacson were "personal in nature and not a matter of principle." On the contrary, in the original transcript, Angara said: "*Iyong sa amin ni Lacson, hindi naman* personal (What's between me and Lacson is not personal). It's principle."

* * *

IN THE JAN. 30 issue, Ramon Tulfo's "On Target" column on Page A20—"$5-M reward should go to the Marine Corps"—misstated that Marines killed Abu Sayyaf senior leader Jainal Antel Sali alias Abu Sulaiman. Sulaiman was killed by elite Army troops—not Marines—in an encounter in Talipa, Sulu, on Jan. 16. It was Khadaffy Janjalani whom Marines killed in an encounter last September.

* * *

IN THE JAN. 31 issue, a story on Page A2—"Comelec lifts ban on surveys"—misstated that television network ABS-CBN was a complainant in the 2001 Supreme Court decision that favored election surveys as part of the freedom of expression. The actual petitioners in the case were Social Weather Stations and Manila Standard—not ABS-CBN. The television network, however, was the petitioner in a 2000 Supreme Court decision upholding exit polls as part of the freedom of speech and the press.

* * *

IN EARLIER EDITIONS of the same issue, a story on Page A4—"Pimentel pooh-poohs BIR feat"—had an erroneous headline. In the article, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. was attributing to higher imports the excess in the collection performance of the Bureau of Customs—not the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, February 1, 2007
4th Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Heb 12;18-19, 21-24
Gospel: Mark 6:7-13

Jesus called the Twelve to him and began to send them out two by two, giving them authority over evil spirits. And he ordered them to take nothing for the journey except a staff; no food, no bag, no money in their belts. They were to wear sandals and were not to take an extra tunic.

And he added, "In whatever house you are welcomed, stay there until you leave the place. If any place doesn't receive you and the people refuse to listen to you, leave after shaking the dust off your feet. It will be a testimony against them."

So they set out to proclaim that this was the time to repent. They drove out many demons and healed many sick people by anointing them.

Commentary

There was the epiphany of the God of Sinai that was terrifying in its power and overwhelming and there is the epiphany of the God of Jesus, the first-born and judge, the mediator of the new covenant that has come through the blood of the cross. This is our heritage and the grace that we are to preach and share with all others. We too are sent out two by two (who do you travel/teach with?) and we are to go lightly, wearing sandals and trusting those we meet to care for us. Their generosity will be triggered by their welcome of the good news of the Gospel that we bear with us. The disciples went preaching repentance, expelling what was hindering others, and anointing the sick. This too is our work as disciples, basic and necessary, both for the world we live in and ourselves.

Talks breakdown won't affect gains vs Abu–Bunye

PALACE SPOKESPERSON IGNAcio Bunye yesterday tried to allay fears that the breakdown in peace talks between the government and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Mindanao would threaten the gains scored in the campaign against the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf group, one of the most wanted terror organizations in the world.

As government peace negotiators scurried to stop an outbreak of fighting last week between the army and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Midsayap, North Cotabato, Palace spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Wednesday Malacañang was confident the MILF would continue to help them hunt down wanted Islamic militants.

"We are confident the MILF will continue to back up the counterterrorism campaign as part of its commitment to peace and the rule of law, having renounced any links with the Abu Sayyaf and the (Indonesia-based terror network) Jemaah Islamiyah," presidential spokesman Ignacio Bunye said.

US blacklist

The two latter groups are on the US government's blacklist of foreign terror organizations believed to have links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network and are the target of a big military offensive in southwestern Sulu archipelago.

Government troopers, backed by United States financial and technical support, had claimed a breakthrough with the killing of Abu Sayyaf's top two leaders—chieftain Khaddaffy Janjalani and his deputy and presumed successor Jainal Antel Sali, known as Abu Sulaiman.

But the assumed presence in the area of two top Indonesian terrorists, identified as Bali bomb suspects Dulmatin and Umar Patek, could make a military report on the collapsing status of the Abu Sayyaf seem premature and wishful.

A military report shown to the Associated Press had claimed the Abu Sayyaf after the death of its top leaders was "isolated from its foreign backers and severely impaired in its ability to carry out terror attacks." The report also predicted that the group would be forced "back to banditry," and would be abandoned by many of its fighters, leaving only a few hardcore commanders to seek refuge with other rebel groups.

Links with JI

While the Philippine military report saw no apparent successors with foreign funding connections, the US government offered on Monday a $50,000 (P2.45 million) reward for the capture of Abdul Basit Usman, a former MILF special operations chief now believed to be hiding with the Abu Sayyaf.

Usman has reportedly already forged links with the JI, and is wanted for a string of bomb attacks on Mindanao island last year.

Bunye welcomed the US bounty on Basit, stressing that it would help bring "greater peace of mind" in the impoverished region plagued by terrorism.

"Our alliance with the United States in the fight against terror extends to all fronts," he said.

The two Indonesian terrorists in Sulu, the military assessment conceded, could serve as the extremist group's lifeline to help them recover from setbacks, including helping Janjalani's successor reestablish contacts with foreign supporters.

Final battle

Former military chief of staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, now the country's secretary of defense, has vowed to wipe out the Abu Sayyaf's remnants, estimated to number 350, through what he said could be the "final battles against the militants while they wallow in crisis."

With AP reports

Selling poll automation to public takes time–Abalos

By Jerome Aning

THE COMMISSION ON ELECtions needs enough time not just to implement the election automation law but also to ensure its acceptance by the public.

"Anything new is somehow not that easily accepted by our people," said Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr.

He said even politicians, among them Camarines Sur Rep. Arnulfo Fuentebella, Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar and his own son, Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos, have apprehensions about election automation.

"They asked, what if they lost because the wrong buttons were pressed?" Abalos told a press conference.

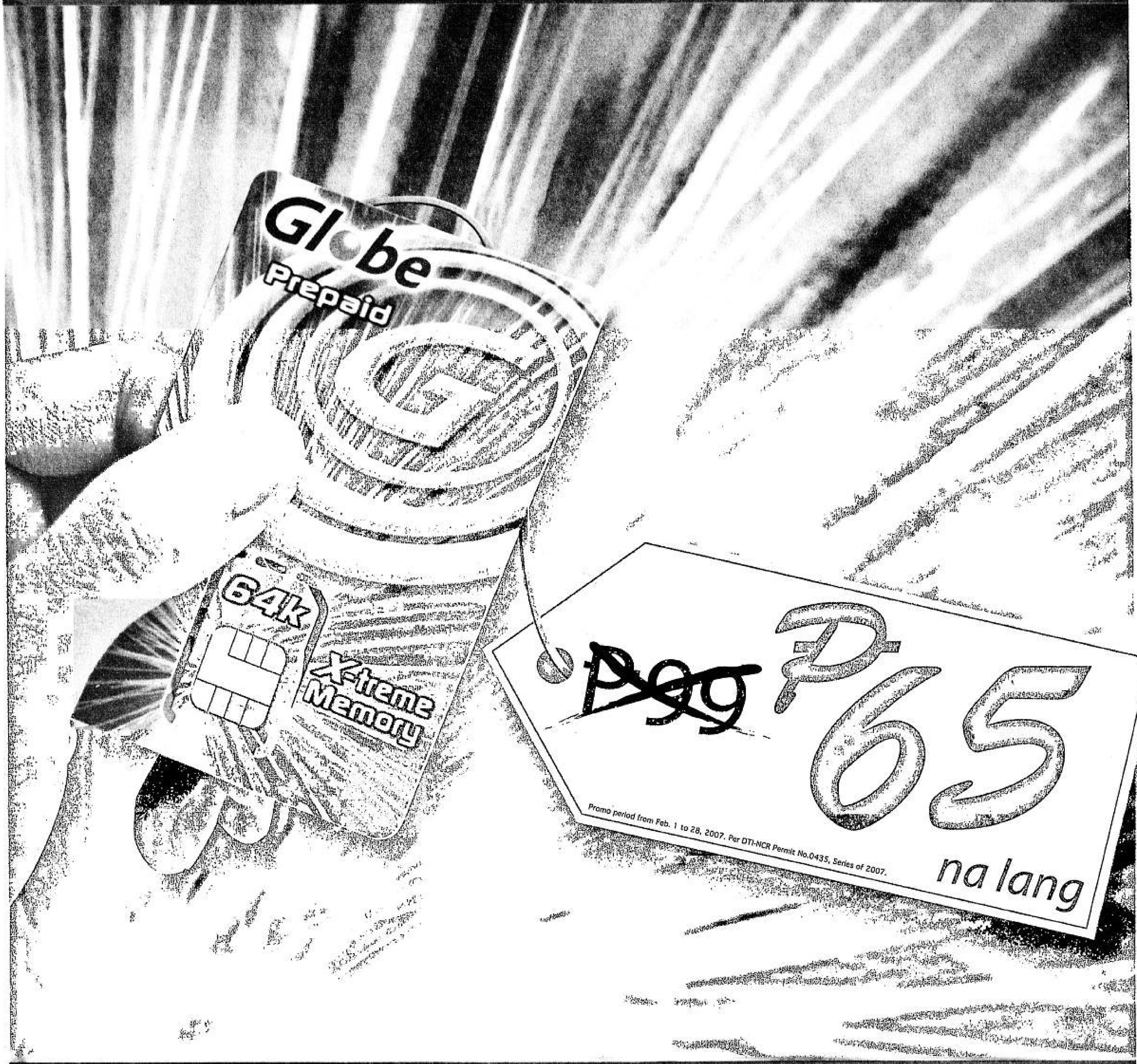
"That is why there is need for stakeholder education and training because the acceptability of the technology by our people is important," he added.

Abalos pointed out that Section 26 of the recently signed RA 9369, or the Automated Elections Systems Law, requires public education and an information drive not later than six months before the automated poll exercise.

The education and training program has to be widespread and undertaken through the media, public gatherings and other means.

It should ensure the acceptance by various sectors and the readiness of all stakeholders to understand and appreciate the automation, the Comelec chair said.

"Gusto ko magaan ang presyo, pero mas bigatin ang offer."



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Economy grew 5.4% in '06, missing target due to storms

From page A1

is GDP plus income earned abroad.

In the fourth quarter last year, GDP grew 4.8 percent year-on-year.

Highest growth

Of the country"s three major sectors, services posted the highest growth at 6.3 percent for 2006, although this was a slowdown from 2005's 6.4 percent.

The industry sector grew 4.8 percent in 2006, a deceleration from the 4.9 percent recorded the previous year.

The agriculture, fisheries and forestry (AFF) sector recorded a growth of 4.1 percent, up from the 1.8 percent recorded a year ago.

Neri said the accelerated growth of the AFF sector was primarily due to better weather in most of the year that boosted farm output. By contrast, El Niño bedeviled 2005.

Typhoons

The performance of the AFF sector, however, was dragged down in the fourth quarter by a number of typhoons that devastated farmlands.

The sector grew only 1.9 percent in the fourth quarter from a year ago. Neri said the full-year AFF growth of 4.1 percent should have been higher if not for the poor performance in the fourth quarter.

"Recovery of agriculture and the healthy performance of the services sectors helped prop up full-year economic growth. Nonetheless, the tropical cyclones that hit the country in the fourth quarter affected agriculture output," Neri said at a press conference in Makati City.

Mining contracted

The country's chief economist said the 5.5-percent GDP growth target was not achieved partly because of the under-performance of the mining sector, which many believed would have substantially boosted the economy following the sector's liberalization.

The mining and quarrying subsector contracted 6 percent last year, pulling down the industry sector. The previous year, the subsector grew 9.3 percent growth.

Consumption, exports

Strong inflows in the form of remittances from overseas Filipino workers boosted consumption of households.

Data from the NSCB showed that net factor income from abroad (NFIA), which includes inflows from OFW remittances, grew 15.4 percent in 2006, faster than the 13.5 percent in 2005.

Exports grew 12.9 percent in 2006, much faster than the 4.2 percent in 2005.

The growth in exports was higher than the official target of 10 percent, and was attributed to strong global demand for electronics, the country's major export product.

Although the GDP growth fell short of the 5.5 percent target, this was not expected to drag down growth prospects for 2007, officials said.

P1.13-trillion budget

Neri said he was confident GDP growth this year would range from 6.1 to 6.7 percent, citing the imminent passage of a P1.13-trillion budget which will allow increased spending on infrastructure.

He warned, however, that growth in 2007 would depend largely on avoiding "the downside risks in both the external and domestic fronts."

This included a possible slowdown in the United States, the Philippines' largest export market, although he hoped that an upturn in Europe and Japan would compensate for this.

"Much will also depend on how the country is able to entice both local and foreign investors, who in turn, need to see consistent and investor-friendly policies," Neri said.

Economists agreed that the passage of the higher budget for 2007 would help spur economic growth.

"The increased spending on key infrastructure projects has a significant multiplier effect since this will also increase employment and encourage investments," Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities said.

Song Sen Wun, senior economist with the Singapore-based CIMB-GK Research, said the government's growth projection would depend on external demand.

"There are expectations the US economy could ease this year, and that would impact on Philippine exports."

Growth forecast 6.1-6.7%

"The growth forecast looks a bit ambitious, especially with the drag on GDP growth in the second half of last year, but if the agriculture sector recovers and remittances from Filipinos working abroad are sustained, there is a chance it can be done," said Song.

Dennis Arroyo, director for policy and planning of the National Economic and Development Authority, said the government was keeping the 6.1- to 6.7-percent GDP growth target for 2007 on account of the slowdown in inflation, declining interest rate and improving fiscal position of the government.

Arroyo said the slowdown in inflation is expected to encourage more consumer spending, thus boosting growth. Inflation settled at 4.3 percent last December, the slowest in almost three years.

The decline in interest rates is expected to encourage businesses to invest because lower rates mean lower cost of bank loans, Arroyo said. The 91-day Treasury bill rate, the benchmark in pricing bank loans, recently settled at an all-time low of 3.1 percent.

Electronics growth

He also said exports were expected to continue posting robust growth in 2007, noting the forecast by US-based Semiconductor Industry Association that global electronics sales would grow by 11 percent in 2007.

The expected growth in global demand for electronics, Arroyo said, was partly anchored on the launching of Microsoft's new operating system called "Vista."

The new operating system is expected to encourage firms to upgrade and purchase new computers, he said. *With a report from AFP*

White House climate change cover-up uncovered

From page A1

sonally experienced political interference in the past five years, for a total of at least 435 incidents.

"Nearly half of all respondents perceived or personally experienced pressure to eliminate the words 'climate change,' 'global warming' or other similar terms from a variety of communications," Grifo said.

Soft-pedal findings

Rick Piltz, a former US government scientist who said he resigned in 2005 after pressure to soft-pedal findings on global warming, told the House committee that former White House official Phil Cooney took an active role in casting doubt on the consequences of global climate change.

Cooney, who was a lobbyist for the American Petroleum Institute before becoming chief of staff at the White House Council on Environmental Quality, resigned in 2005 to work for oil giant ExxonMobil.

Documents on global climate change required Cooney's review and approval, Piltz said.

"His edits of program reports, which had been drafted and approved by career science program managers, had the cumulative effect of adding an enhanced sense of scientific uncertainty about global warming and minimizing its likely consequences," he added.

Part of his job, according to Piltz, was to compile periodic assessments of government climate research for Congress. "This report has essentially been made to vanish by the Bush administration," he said.

Political interference

Rep. Henry Waxman, a California Democrat who chairs the committee, complained that the White House had balked at supplying documents requested over six months to investigate these allegations.

"The committee isn't trying to obtain state secrets or documents that could affect our immediate national security," Waxman said. "We are simply seeking answers to whether the White House's political staff is inappropriately censoring impartial government scientists."

Kristen Hellmer of the Council on Environmental Quality said the council had been cooperating with Congress. When asked about allegations of political interference in scientific documents, she said: "We do have in place a very transparent system in science reporting."

Evolving position

Tuesday's hearing was one of two spotlighting global climate change. A Senate forum featured testimony from members, including presidential hopefuls, Democratic Senators Hillary Clinton of New York and Barack Obama of Illinois, and Republican John McCain of Arizona.

President George W. Bush's position on global warming has evolved over his presidency, from open skepticism about the reality of the phenomenon to acknowledgment at a global summit last year that climate change is occurring and human activities speed it up.

In his State of the Union address on Jan. 23, Bush called climate change "a serious challenge" that should be addressed by technology and greater use of alternative sources of energy.

But he stopped short of calling for mandatory limits on US emissions of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas blamed in part for global warming.

These discussions are part of the run-up to Friday's release in Paris of a major UN report on climate change.

Drafts of the report strengthened the case that humans are the principal cause of global warming after 1950. *Reports from Reuters and New York Times News Service*

UNO preempts 'Third Force,' ...

From page A1

ing the issue of the Third Force," Makati Mayor and UNO president Jejomar Binay said in reference to the supposed middling senatorial lineup being formed by other groups.

Loren Legarda, a former senator and an independent candidate, is the only woman in the UNO slate composed of aspiring returnees to the Senate, graduates of the House of Representatives, and scions of politicians.

Also in the slate is Estrada's son, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, who said his senatorial candidacy was "the nation's clamor."

But barely two hours earlier at the signing of a youth covenant at the University of the Philippines Bahay ng Alumni, where he was asked to seek a Senate seat, Ejercito told the Inquirer: "I am elated and honored by this endorsement. However, I have not decided yet if I will run for the Senate."

UNO spokesperson Ernesto Maceda said the other four candidates would soon be announced by partners in the Senate. (Officials said there were four sure candidates but refused to name names.)

Maceda said the remaining negotiating member-parties were still selecting four out of six contenders.

Binay added that UNO would make "a formal and official declaration of the lineup" and then engage in discussions of the coalition's platform.

Electoral protest pending

Legarda was the running mate of Estrada's late best friend, opposition standard-bearer Fernando Poe Jr., in the 2004 presidential election. Her electoral protest against Vice President Noli de Castro is still pending.

At the Senate, she was among those who pursued the impeachment case against Estrada.

Also on the list is incumbent Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who served as Estrada's national police chief, and who had changed his mind about seeking the post of Manila mayor in the coming elections.

Seeking a return to the Senate as well is John Osmeña of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), who also ran but lost in May 2004 under President Macapagal-Arroyo's party.

Of that experience, Osmeña told reporters: "I admit, I made a mistake. That was my biggest mistake. What happened will never happen again."

Making up the "youth sector" in the slate are Representatives Francis Escudero (NPC) and Alan Peter Cayetano (Nacionalista Party), brother of incumbent Sen. Pia Cayetano and son of the late Sen. Rene Cayetano; Ejercito; Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino (Liberal Party), only son of former President Corazon Aquino; and Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III, son and namesake of the incumbent senator who heads the minority in the chamber.

'They dropped themselves'

The list of eight is a corrected version of an earlier lineup Estrada had announced, and which included Senate President Manuel Villar and former Sen. Vicente Sotto III.

Sotto has defected from the UNO and is reportedly being considered for the administration slate.

The only addition to the partial list is Aquino, who may have wrested the slot from his aunt, former Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta, who also recently left UNO.

"As you've seen from the ... list, we would even thank the two (Sotto and Oreta) because they opened up two seats to accommodate others," Maceda said, adding:

"We didn't drop them. They dropped themselves."

Former Vice President Teofisto Guingona is another dropout, having decided not to run for the Senate.

Maceda said Guingona—an Arroyo critic who, as senator, led the impeachment of Estrada—had "begged off" as two in his family would be joining the local election race in Bukidnon.

Binay had earlier said Guingona was sure to lead UNO's senatorial roster. Maceda said yesterday that, while out of the list, Guingona had vowed to actively participate in the campaign.

Campaign activity

At the UP Bahay ng Alumni, Lloyd Zaragoza, lead convenor of the Kabataan Para sa Bayan, said his group believed that JV Ejercito would be "a good champion for the youth in the Senate" as he would "fiercely advocate legislative measures to greatly improve the lives of all young people of the land, *ang pag-asa ng bayan* (the hope of the nation)."

Kabataan Para sa Bayan is a coalition of youth groups that drafted the Kartilya ng Kabataan, which contains the needs of the youth today, like access to quality education, freedom of expression and from discrimination, and employment.

The coalition includes the Kabataan party-list group, Sanlakas-Youth, and College Editors' Guild of the Philippines, among other groups.

The event appeared like a campaign activity, with the crowd chanting "JV! JV!" as the mayor entered the building.

After the endorsement in the latter part of the program, tarpaulins bearing Ejercito's picture and the words "JV Ejercito para sa Senado" were unfurled, and the crowd erupted in cheers.

The mayor then went to the podium, thanked his audience and said he had not yet decided on his candidacy.

He also denied to the Inquirer that he was testing the waters of his possible voter base, the youth.

Nevertheless, participants were later handed giveaways such as calendars and rubber wrist bands bearing Ejercito's name. An aide of the mayor said the wrist bands came from the Kabataan Para sa Bayan, which Zaragoza later confirmed.

Team Unity

The top man of the ruling Lakas-CMD yesterday declared that the administration coalition would add "enlightened, moderate and constructive" candidates from the opposition in its senatorial slate.

In an interview with reporters in Malacañang, Speaker and Lakas president Jose de Venecia said: "We need to have a constructive, enlightened opposition. We have to develop the moderates in the country as against the extremist and the radicals."

Asked if former Senators Sotto and Oreta would fall into this category, De Venecia said: "That is the grist of moderation."

Michael Defensor, Ms Arroyo's chief of staff, said there was "no stopping" the formation of "Team Unity"—the administration slate that would include candidates from the opposition—for the upcoming polls. *With reports from Miko L. Morelos and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. in Manila; Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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Gov't to start bidding out P7B worth of AFP equipment

THE PHILIPPINES WILL START accepting bids this month for the supply of P7 billion worth of equipment to modernize the country's military to fight terrorists and other enemies, President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday.

The acquisitions will be part of a P10 billion procurement Ms Arroyo earlier approved to modernize the armed forces, one of the most poorly-equipped in Asia.

The government has 15 items on its shopping list, including a multipurpose attack gunboat, automatic weapons, global positioning systems, aerial mapping cameras, night capable attack helicopters, bomb suits and radios.

"For the month of February, we are ready for the formal submission and opening of bids," Ms Arroyo said in a statement. "I am confident that the notices to proceed will be issued by the middle of March 2007."

She said the items are in addition to the contracts approved last year to upgrade three patrol vessels, two patrol gunboats and two Britten Norman Islander aircraft worth P707 million pesos.

The modernization program will "equip our soldiers with the military hardware necessary to sustain internal security operations, including AFP's antiterrorism campaign, and address other nontraditional security threats," she said, referring to the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Aside from al-Qaida-linked Islamic militants, the military is also battling a 7,200-strong communist insurgency and other armed groups. *AP*

DOH calls year-round war vs dengue

By Christian V. Esguerra

WITH THE DENGUE virus showing unusual behavior, the Department of Health yesterday announced a year-round offensive against the mosquito-borne disease that downed at least 189 Filipinos just last month.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III made the announcement following two epidemics that killed at least four people in Laguna and Agusan del Sur.

A DOH statement attributed to Duque yesterday described the twin epidemics as "unusual for the year."

The disease, carried by aedes aegypti mosquitoes, usually attacks on a two- to three-year cycle and the country was not ripe for another onslaught this year.

Still, the DOH National Epidemiology Center (NEC) recorded 189 cases from the government-run San Lazaro Hospital from Jan. 1 to 20 alone.

The figure was up by 13 from the number of cases reported during the same period last year, according to the DOH.

The agency said the NEC was also checking the reported increase in number of new cases at the Rizal Medical Center which tentatively stood at 27, and at the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine which was pegged at 16.

Of the total number of cases for January, 160 were from Metro Manila. These cases, however, didn't require the declaration of "hotspots" or "outbreaks."

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Last week, Mr. Isidro Rodriguez (right), President of GLCI hosted employers from Virginia and North Carolina, USA. They were in the Philippines to hire teachers through Green Life Care International NY, USA. Eight more employers are expected to arrive this mid-February to interview teachers for SY 2007-08. For more inquiries, visit our office at WorldGoal Corporation, 3F Rm301 532 Avenue Square Garden, United Nations Avenue cor. Bocobo Street, Manila. Tel nos. (02)4007421 /(02)3394625, mobile nos. (632)9209531252 and (632)9198772865 or log on to www.greenlifecareinternational.com
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Bin Laden's kin in RP killed

From page A1

"They stole everything—his computer, all of his things," he said.

The Al-Arabiya satellite TV channel said the businessman was staying at a precious stones mine he owns in Madagascar when he was killed.

"We still don't have a complete picture of the incident," Malek told Al-Arabiya by telephone from Saudi Arabia's Red Sea port of Jeddah.

"I don't think it was politically motivated," he added in response to a question.

Malek said he did not have more details because his brother was a Saudi citizen and Saudi Arabia did not have an embassy on the East African island.

He said his main concern was "to collect my brother's body."

He said Khalifa's wife and family were in Saudi Arabia.

The Philippine government sought Khalifa for allegedly financing the Abu Sayyaf, an Islamic militant group, through a charity organization in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Janjalani interview

The Philippine Daily Inquirer, in what was the last interview given by the leader of the Abu Sayyaf group before his death, on Jan. 22 quoted Khadaffy Janjalani as saying that his group had received funds from two men close to Bin Laden, identifying one of them as Jamal Khalifa.

But CNN reported on Tuesday that Khalifa called reports he had funded the Abu Sayyaf group in return for volunteers to fight in Afghanistan "completely false."

"I have never given any money to any group or persons that include the Abu Sayyaf," CNN quoted Khalifa as writing in an e-mail.

E-mail address

Khalifa also made the denial in a letter that was published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer on Saturday in which he said: "I have never given any money to any person or group, and certainly not to the Abu Sayyaf."

"According to (Octavio) Dinampo (a professor of Mindanao State University [MSU]-Sulu), in his February 2006 interview with Janjalani, the latter told him that 'they received from me and Ramzi Yousef P6 million in exchange for sending volunteers to Afghanistan.' This is completely false," Khalifa said.

He noted that the Soviet Union left Afghanistan in 1989, the year the Abu Sayyaf broke into the news in the Philippines.

Jihad over

"It means that the jihad was already over in Afghanistan. The conflict in Afghanistan became a civil war that pitted the Afghans against each other," he said in the letter.

Khalifa said he was in Saudi Arabia, not in the Philippines, in 1998.

"(A)nd in case somebody has forgotten, Yousef was by then already in US custody. So what volunteers was Dinampo talking about? To whom could have I sent them?" he said.

"If Janjalani were alive today, he should be around 31 years old. That means he was only 14 years old in 1989, about the time he allegedly received money from me. Or even if it was already 1992, he would still have been in his teenage years. Does this make any sense?" he said in his letter to the INQUIRER.

Khalifa, who signed the letter as "Jamal Khalifa" and gave an e-mail address—khalifa_jamal@yahoo.com, wrote that he had written President Macapagal-Arroyo in July 2001 offering to help and assist the Philippine government.

Co-conspirator

The United States named Khalifa an "unindicted co-conspirator" in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing in New York, and arrested him the following year on a visa violation in San Francisco. But he was deported without standing trial.

In his letter to the INQUIRER, Khalifa said he had a "disagreement" with Bin Laden and left Afghanistan in 1986, "and we have been apart from each other since then."

Bin Laden, the most wanted terrorist in the world, is believed to be hiding somewhere in the Afghan-Pakistan border region.

"With regard to Yousef, it has already been proven in US and Jordan courts—not just before the media—that I have no relationship with him," Khalifa said in his letter to the INQUIRER.

Malek also denied his brother was involved in political activity, and said that apart from family ties, Khalifa had no links to Bin Laden, a Saudi national who was stripped of his citizenship long before the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

Chief Supt. Romeo Ricardo, chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Intelligence Group, said Khalifa had severed his financial links to the two groups when he left the country in the mid-'90s.

Business card

"It (death of Khalifa) would have no effect on the financial links to the two groups since the funding had stopped when [Khalifa] left the country," he said.

Ricardo said Philippine immigration authorities had banned Khalifa from entering the country, "because of his previous activities."

His business cards were found in the possession of Yousef, who planned to assassinate Pope John Paul II during the Pontiff's visit to the Philippines in January 1995.

Khalifa, together with Yousef, was also said to have been involved in a plot to bomb international airline flights or crash them into specific targets in the so-called "Operation Bojinka."

He also had links to known al-Qaida members Wali Khan Amin Shah and Khalid Sheik Mohammed, according to the PNP. *Reports from AP, Reuters and Alcuin Papa*

RP cops accused Khalifa of financing terrorists

MOHAMMAD JAMAL KHALIFA BECAME director of the International Islamic Relief Organization's Manila office in 1988.

The Saudi Arabia-based IIRO was established in 1978 to help victims of calamities all over the world.

The group, which gets funds from the Saudi government and private donors, had provided assistance to Muslim communities in Central Mindanao and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

A 1995 intelligence report of the Philippine National Police also accused Khalifa of financing the attempt by Ramzi Yousef's group to assassinate Pope John Paul II during the latter's visit to the Philippines that year.

Khalifa was also linked to a 1995 bomb explosion in a cinema in Amman, Jordan, which injured only the planter of the bomb.

The bomber, Saudi Arabian Abdullah al-Hashaikh, had applied as a teacher in an Islamic school set up by IIRO in Mindanao. After getting arrested, he said Khalifa was behind the terror act.

At the request of Jordanian authorities, Khalifa was arrested in the United States and was jailed for four months in a maximum-security unit in San Francisco. He sought extradition to Jordan, where he was later absolved of the crime.

In a 1998 INQUIRER interview, Khalifa denied involvement with Bin Laden's terrorist activities. He said they parted ways in 1987 when he discovered Bin Laden was "going wrong."

Khalifa disappeared from the Philippines following the 9/11 attacks. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

Victim

From page A1

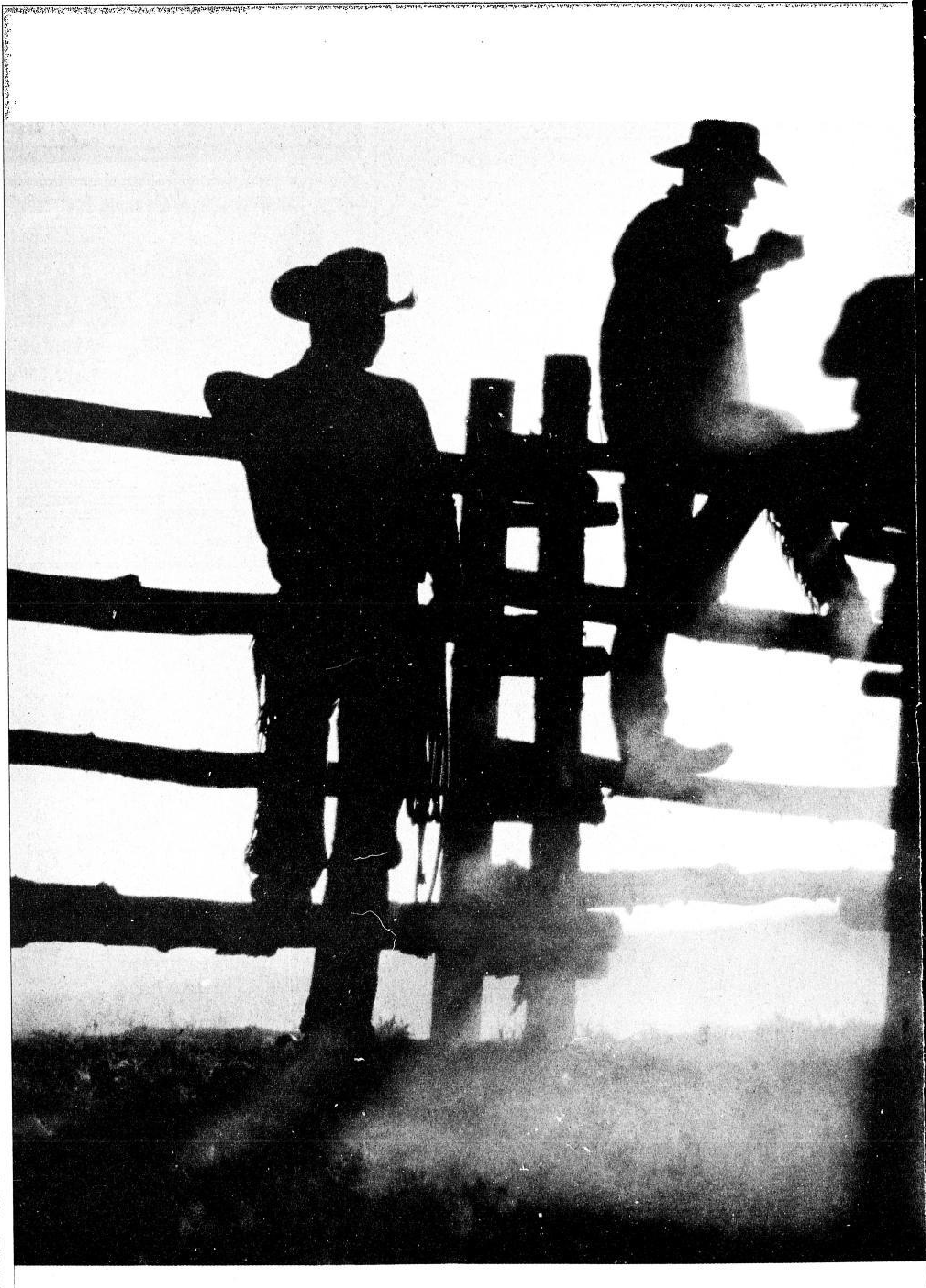
Council is doing the itinerary
it," she added.

Sherlyn Cadapan and fello
Empeño were reportedly a
men somewhere in Bulacan
Their families are nursing h
still alive, but want the UN ra
to their case.

"We hope that he can hea
Erlinda Cadapan said at a
"We are also willing to coo
groups that want to do an in
gation into the killings a
ances."

At the annual vin d'h
cañang, Ms Arroyo told th
munity that her administra
best to resolve the killing
leftist activists, and that th
not as serious as claimed by
tions.

She raised doubt on the n



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mber of cases that

militant groups had reported, but said her administration was "not stopping" in its "crusade for human rights."

EU 'encouraged'

After meeting with retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo the other day, the President issued a six-point directive that included asking the European community, Sweden, Spain and Finland to send investigators to help in the Melo Commission's inquiry into the unabated killings.

European Union Representative to the Philippines Alistair MacDonald and Papal Nuncio Fernando Filoni yesterday expressed appreciation for the steps being taken by Malacañang to resolve the killings.

MacDonald said that he found Ms Arroyo's directive "encouraging," and that the European Union would await the Philippine request "and see what kind of cooperation the government is interested in."

"The EU is extremely interested in the investigations being carried [to] completion, in the real events being established and those who are guilty being taken to court, and in particular in these killings coming to an end," he also told reporters.

"I'm sure that the international community is very keen to help the Philippine government to fully assume its own responsibilities," he added.

Feloni said Ms Arroyo's move to seek help from the European community was a step in the right direction.

"I think the Filipino people can find in [themselves] steps and strengths to overcome these problems," the Papal Nuncio said.

In separate instances, the European Union had expressed alarm over the unabated killings and urged the Arroyo administration to take concrete steps to stop them.

The US, too

It was after one such call that Ms Arroyo formed the Melo Commission to look into the extrajudicial killings.

The United States wants to join the European Union in helping the Arroyo administration expedite the inquiry into the killings.

"The European Union has special expertise [it has] offered. But we've told her (President Arroyo) that if there are US experts who she thinks will be helpful, we stand ready," US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney told the INQUIRER after the *vin d'honneur.*

Kenney said she offered the US government's services a few weeks ago but that Ms Arroyo had yet to reply. "I told her to let us know how we could be helpful. I haven't heard back yet but I think the European Union is taking that lead," she said.

The ambassador would not say how the US government viewed the number of extrajudicial killings committed under the Arroyo administration, but said: "I think all of us should contribute any expertise we can. [It is] absolutely important for all of us."

Teeth

Kenney, however, praised Ms Arroyo for taking action on the matter. "I really commend the President's statement today. The best thing we can do is to take it seriously," she said.

In her speech, Ms Arroyo said her administration would "work with the Church, activists, the journalist community, government officials, the international community and Justice Melo to strengthen any findings and put teeth in the [commission's] recommendations."

She said investigations by the Philippine National Police's Task Force Usig were showing that the killings were the handiwork of communist rebels as well as "possibly elements of our own military."

But she cited "some interesting facts" showing that 23 of the killings were done by the communist New People's Army against its own men.

Ms Arroyo also cited the "discrepancy" between the number of cases reported by "the front organizations of the communists" and the number of cases reported by the PNP.

Two cases that were reported by these groups as extrajudicial killings turned out to be false when the victims were "confirmed to be alive," she said, adding:

"It's disheartening to contemplate that anyone upholding the people's rights could engage in such deeds. I need to absorb fully what it means."

Ms Arroyo called on the families of victims, witnesses and militant groups to cooperate in the investigation of the Melo Commission.

"We're calling [on them] to speak out, lay the evidence and serve the high cause of justice," she said.

Militant organizations had boycotted the proceedings of the commission, claiming it lacked credibility and independence.

Whitewash

Evangeline Hernandez, mother of slain Ateneo de Davao University school paper editor Benjaline Hernandez, expressed doubt that anything substantial would come out of Ms Arroyo's plan to continue the Melo Commission's inquiry into the political killings, even if it would include EU investigators.

"Whatever 'joint fact-finding body' formed by Arroyo will only be a 'joint whitewash body,' and we will never trust it," said Hernandez, convener of Hustisya, a group of families of slain activists.

Hernandez said a number of international fact-finding missions had already visited the country and all had found the Arroyo administration accountable for failing to stop the killings.

She cited the International Solidarity Mission in August 2005 and the fact-finding mission of international groups of peasants, workers and lawyers last year.

"Even Amnesty International has come up with a report on the extrajudicial killings," she said.

In its report, Amnesty International said the series of killings was an embarrassment to the Philippines as a constitutional democracy.

It said that to be credible, independent probe teams should also include human rights organizations from civil society.

It added that the inclusion of representatives of such groups as the military, which had also been accused of rights violations, affected the credibility of the investigative body.

The Melo Commission does not include representatives of human rights groups.

99.9 percent

In her speech, Ms Arroyo defended the military, which had been accused by militant groups to be behind the extrajudicial killings.

She said she believed that "99.9 percent of our military are good, hardworking and patriotic Filipinos."

"They do heroic things like killing terrorists in battle, putting their lives on the line every day to protect the nation, and make our homeland safer," she said.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita echoed the President's call for witnesses and militant groups to come forward.

He said the Melo Commission's report was "hardly a comprehensive report" considering that militant groups were not present at the hearings.

In fact, Ermita said, the commission merely relied on the testimonies of the military, including that of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan in coming up with its initial report.

"We are urging the families of the victims, those who care to represent the activists killed, [to cooperate], so the commission will have a better picture of the entire situation, so the truth will come out," Ermita told reporters.

He said that because of the noncooperation of the militant groups, Malacañang could not help but think that these groups were behaving in this way so as to "discredit the work of the commission."

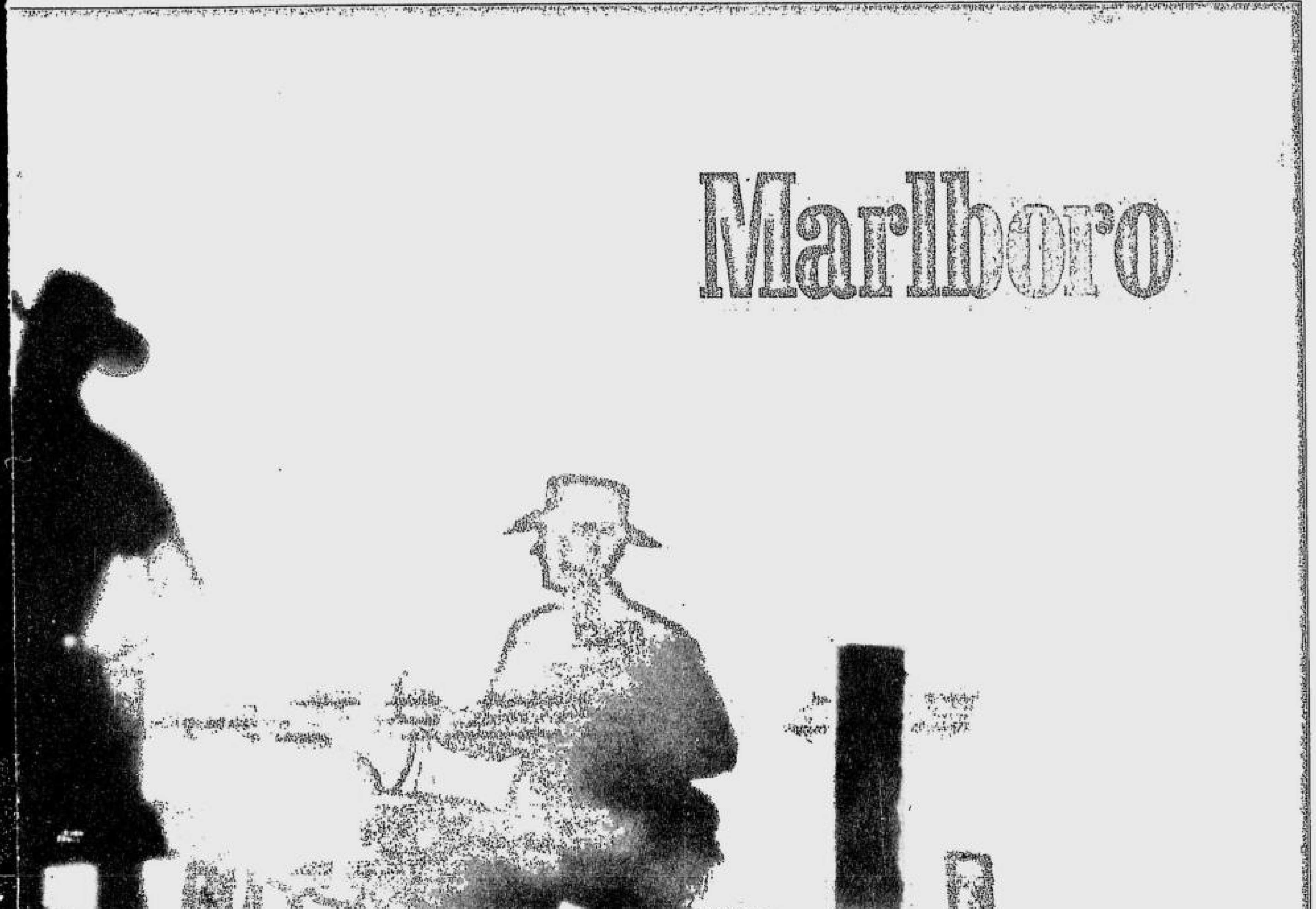
Separate body

But Rep. Teodoro Casiño of the militant party-list group Bayan Muna said he and his colleagues would cooperate with the continued inquiry only if an independent body with the power to protect witnesses would be formed by Malacañang.

In an interview, Casiño called on the President to create a fact-finding body separate from the Melo Commission.

He said any new investigation should neither be under the umbrella of the commission nor "use its framework."

"The new body should be truly independent, adhere to international human rights standards, and be composed of members acceptable to the victims' families and human rights community," he said. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Michael Lim Ubac*



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OPINION

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EDITORIAL

NOTHING GOVERNMENT CAN DO ABOUT THE rampant and unabated murders of activists will probably satisfy the Left—or nothing short of President Macapagal-Arroyo ordering some top military officers hanged, drawn and quartered, and then committing seppuku herself. So it was with great disappointment and dismay that some lawmakers belonging to Left-wing party-list organizations received the report that the Melo Commission was recommending that some military officers be held accountable for the killings of leftist activists in their areas of assignment. The commission, headed by retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo, mentioned in particular retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, who was labelled "*berdugo*" for having allegedly ordered the series of extrajudicial killings of leftists wherever he was assigned.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo noted that the commission was "silent on GMA's role" and that the executions were continuing. Another Bayan Muna leader, Rep. Teodoro Casiño, said the commission missed the whole point of the exercise since it was the anti-insurgency policies of the Arroyo administration that allowed Palparan and his kind to "wreak terror on a national scale."

Despite what these lawmakers consider a gross omission, the Melo Commission nevertheless seems to have succeeded in pushing the administration to alter its smug attitude toward the killings and in providing it with an excuse to move to stop them finally. After meeting with Melo Tuesday, Ms Arroyo issued a series of instructions that could lead to a deeper and wider investigation as well as the identification and prosecution of those who were responsible for the killings.

A key component of the six-point program to stop the killings is the invitation to the European Union to send representatives to help the Melo Commission. The EU and some of its member-countries have grown increasingly vocal in condemning the killings and in demanding that the government act to stop them. In asking the EU to join in the investigation, Ms Arroyo is apparently trying to mollify the West's unease over the killings and other violations of human rights by her administration. At the same time she has, wittingly or unwittingly, provided the only effective guarantee of an impartial, thorough and credible investigation of the killings. It is almost inconceivable for representatives of foreign governments to become a party to a whitewash, such as what some critics have called the Melo Commission report.

This proposal should therefore be welcomed, especially now that the military is loath to punish its erring officers and men. Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, while admitting that some soldiers were involved in the killings, wants to spread the blame around, saying communist rebels and goons hired by politicians were behind most of these incidents. He has said that the command responsibility of military officers does not cover extrajudicial killings since such criminal acts "only involve the individual." And he has ruled out a court martial for Palparan and other retired officers saying they were no longer under the military's jurisdiction.

But with the international community not just observing but actually helping in the investigation, it would be interesting to see how the Armed Forces can wiggle out of this one. There may be hope yet that the hundreds of victims of extrajudicial executions will get justice and that the killings, which have been carried out with chilling regularity, will stop at last.

Horrible

FOREIGN COMMENT

IT IS TRULY A DISMAL DAY WHEN WE LEARN THAT THE PRESIdent of our country, the man who is supposed to embody the best in our nation and, it goes without saying, to be an exemplar of good citizenship and of the rule of law, is to be indicted for numerous serious crimes.

While Attorney-General Menahem Mazuz says in his letter to President Moshe Katsav that he is open to being convinced in hearings to withhold an indictment, it is difficult to imagine Mazuz will be shown evidence that will substantially change the horrible picture before us today.

That picture is of 10 women who have accused Katsav of crimes ranging from sexual harassment to rape.

We are acutely aware that any citizen, including the president, is innocent until proven guilty. Yet there is a long standing practice, backed by Supreme Court decisions, that requires cabinet members to resign if indicted. We believe the president should be held to a slightly higher standard and should resign now.

Jerusalem Post (Israel)

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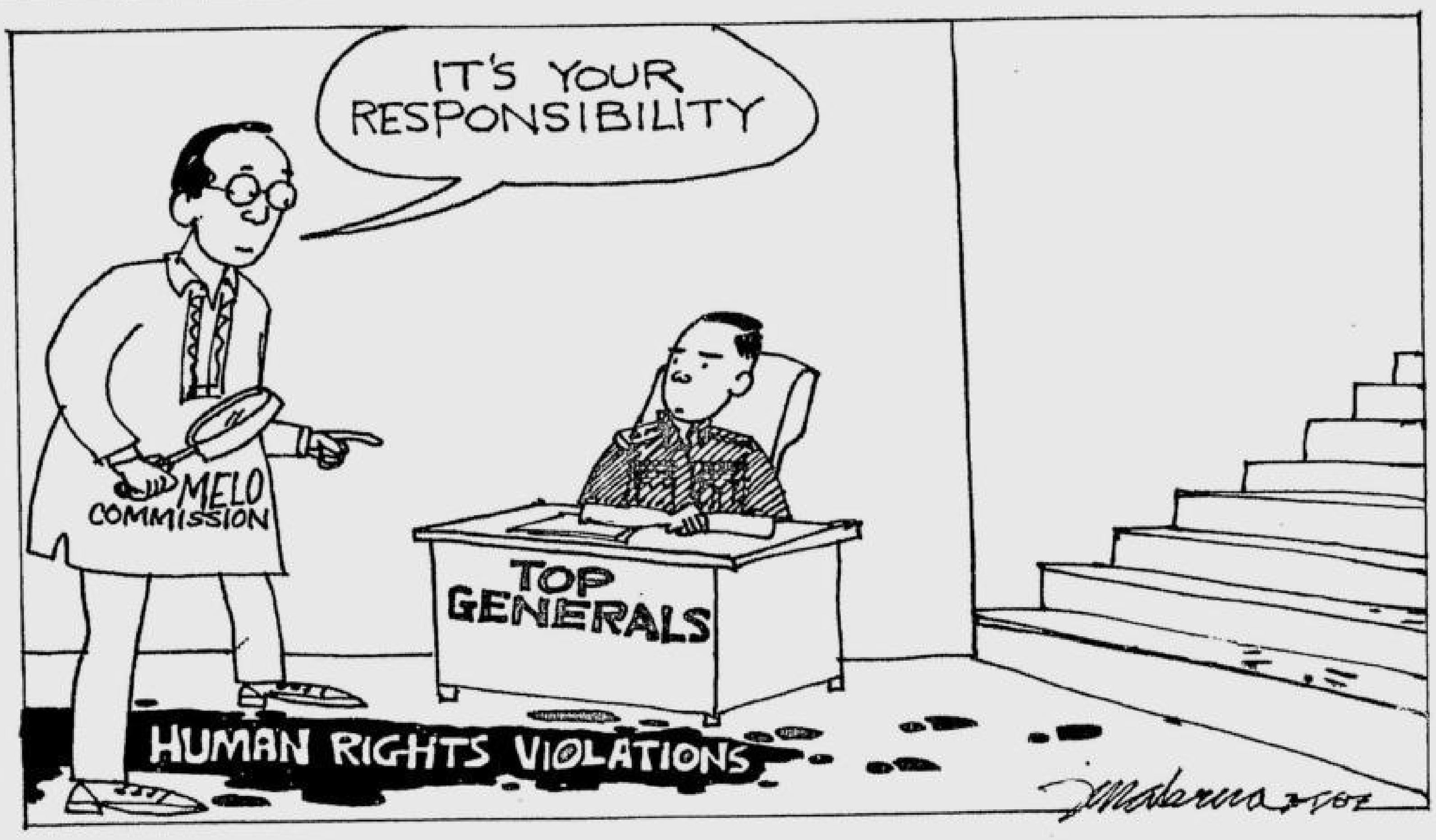

Deportation gag

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION STILL HASN'T explained why it barred an Irish priest, who coauthored a devastating report on mining, from reentering the Philippines early January.

"It's a sovereign country's prerogative to exclude aliens," mumbled Immigration regulation chief Gary Mendoza after blocking Fr. Frank Nally. The justice department didn't reveal why it ordered Father Nally to fly out. Government need not explain why a person landed on the blacklist.

And what about reciprocal treatment for Filipino overseas workers? They're flooding into a country that's among the top five in the European Union today. Arbitrariness does not do our diplomatic relations with Dublin any good. And how does a Catholic scholar of the Columban Justice and Faith group in the United Kingdom end up on the same list as al-Qaida operatives? And why?

Because Father Nally wrote "Mining in the Philippines: Concerns and Conflicts." That's why. This is a 61-page report on the 2006 mission led by former UK secretary of state for overseas development Clare Short. Prepared in cooperation with the National University of Ireland and the Philippine Indigenous Peoples' Link, that study is upsetting the Philippine government.

Mining has a shoddy record seen in 800 abandoned mines. The Philippines is among "the worst countries in the world with regard to tailings, dam failures," UN Environmental Programme records show. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, in 2006, flayed mines in Albay, Palawan, Nueva Vizcaya, South Cotabato, Zamboanga del Norte and Marinduque for massive ecological damage.

"I've never seen anything so systematically destructive as the (Philippine) mining program," Member of Parliament Clare Short writes. "Environmental effects are as catastrophic as are the effects on people's livelihoods .... Government and mining companies should demonstrate that (they will) adhere to their own laws and international mining best practice."

She flayed the World Bank and the EU for spurring destructive mining. EU's "development interventions are failing in the Philippines to live up to (declared) standards: protection of the rights of indigenous peoples and a strong commitment to sustainable development .... The investor community must behave more responsibly in their investment decisions." Would that qualify the Honorable Short for this blacklist, too? Who draws up that list anyway? Who can scrub names from it? And is there a review and appeal process in what is basically a secret drill?

"(We) recognize the external pressures on the Philippines as a deeply indebted country to generate foreign investments," the main report goes on to say. "(But) the emphasis on export-driven mining" could diminish development prospects. "Contrary to recommendations of the 'Extractive Industries Review,' many proposed new mining sites are in areas of conflict, including Mindanao. Government should consider repealing the 1995 Mining Act, enact alternative legislation, as well as create a separate Department of Mines, Hydrocarbons and Geosciences."

The Philippines is one of 17 mega-biodiversity countries. But it is also a geo-hazard hotspot, whiplashed by typhoons, landslides, volcanoes, etc. "Its environmental stability is already under threat." There are doubts whether it can meet the eight Millennium Development Goals by 2015. "Government must therefore exercise extreme caution in authorizing large-scale mining projects."

Relatively strong laws protect indigenous peoples and communities. But these are honored more in breach than in practice. Mining in vital watersheds is often approved. By law, indigenous peoples must give their free, prior, informed consent (FPIC) before any project starts within their ancestral lands. But "this consent is often obtained through misinformation, misrepresentation, bribery and intimidation."

Government agencies are failing to fulfill their mandate to protect indigenous peoples' rights. Many "view the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples as siding with mining companies." Government should "end the contradictory practice of allowing mining companies to assert prior rights claims over ancestral land. And the Philippine Senate should ratify ILO Convention 169."

"Human rights abuses and misreporting are clearly associated with some current mining activities." Companies ought to publish details of payments, taxes and royalties in accordance with the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative.

"Corruption is a serious problem .... Plans for extensive mining operations in remote areas .... will make it worse. And those in government and international agencies seem to lack the capacity or inclination to challenge and end such misconduct..." Consider setting up a Mining Ombudsman, the report suggests.

The team doubts whether the benefits publicized by mining companies, in exchange for incentives, are for real. "Once revenues are offset against costs—in particular, the environmental costs—the net gain will be far lower than that claimed by companies and promoters of mining in government." In addition, "the country may be left with cleanup costs that run into billions of dollars."

In 1892, the Spanish colonial government sentenced Jose Rizal to *destiero* in Dapitan, to muzzle his truth-telling. That exile failed. And deporting, in 2007, a priest-scholar who questioned this country's mining industry will flop. It will only embed abuses that sell Filipinos short.

* * *

E-mail: juanlmercado@gmail.com

Wanted

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

ON THE FACE OF IT, OUR CIRCUMSTANCES today do look desperate.

We have, as the CBCP has just pointed out—thank God we now have someone heaven-sent guiding it, who is Angel Lagdameo; the previous one smelled of sulfur—murder and mayhem rioting like hoodlums, with government unable or unwilling to do a thing about it. Hell, with government aiding and abetting it at every turn. We have, as the CBCP has also just pointed out, an impending election with all the machinery for cheating in place, the Comelec, the electoral body that doesn't know how to count votes, at the heart of it.

We have, as the CBCP has further pointed out, a President who is not the president at all. Or in its more churchly language, one shrouded in much controversy, the "Hello Garci" scandal being one of the "unresolved" issues of the 2004 elections.

We have, as sundry commentators have pointed out, or as our own senses warn us, an ironfisted ruler who is universally loathed but who has been able to do what she pleases with this country; an opposition in shambles with no political or moral authority to commend it to the public; no political figure in sight to pose a serious challenge to the usurper; a military that sets dishonesty up for emulation and nobility down for incarceration; duly elected local officials booted out by a President who never won a presidential election; a people losing all hope things will get better.

On the face of it, our circumstances today do look desperate. But that was the same face of this country two and a half decades ago. We had pretty much the same circumstances then.

In the early 1980s, we had a dictatorship headed by an ironfisted ruler who was universally hated but who was able to do what he pleased with this country. Though assailed by lupus and an increasingly hostile US Congress, Marcos seemed destined to last forever: On the very twilight of his rule, the Reagan government was still talking about him being part of the solution. The military was in total control, a military that rewarded evil (also called mindless obedience), and punished good (also called mindful dissent).

There wasn't much of an opposition, all challenges by way of the vote being thwarted by barefaced cheating. Which made boycott the only sane response to offers of elections periodically dangled by the dictatorship. Murder and mayhem were rife, quite apart from internment in the camps for harboring political beliefs contrary to the fascistic ones of the New Society, the forerunner of today's Strong Republic. And we were a people that had given up hope things could be better.

Then from out of the blue came a Cory Aquino. Or probably more accurately from out of the red, which was the blood her husband spilled on the tarmac in August 1983. The murder of Ninoy Aquino, of course, harnessed the nation's anger. But it does not explain how Cory became the hope of her country.

Indeed, Cory seemed to have everything stacked against her from the start. She was not a politician, or savvy in political affairs. While Ninoy lived, she had stayed in the background, content to be—as Marcos would later tag her deprecatingly—a housewife. She was not charismatic, she spoke in a quiet and unobtrusive way, her detractors having less polite words for quiet and unobtrusive. And to top it all, she belonged to what Marcos had been reviling as the "oligarchy." Cory would later be called a modern-day Joan of Arc, but Joan was the daughter of a poor peasant driven to serve God and country from ecstatic visions. Cory was the daughter of a rich landowner, driven to serve God and country by a traumatic experience.

But she conjured a vision that had all the power in the world, and that has all the bearing on our present circumstances. She stoked up the image of being the opposite of Marcos. In the end, it did not matter what her personal circumstances were. All that mattered was what she represented. Marcos was corrupt, she was innocent. Marcos was death, she was life. Marcos was tyranny, she was freedom. Marcos was repression, she was liberation. Marcos was a liar, she told the truth. Marcos was despair, she was hope. Marcos was a devious politician, she was an honest citizen. Marcos was a nation-wrecker, she was a house-maker. Marcos was evil, she was good. The list went on and on.

Which brings me to my question: Why can't someone like that emerge from the loins of today's despair? Someone who can be the opposite of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo? The thing to give voice to the nation's anger is already there—the "Hello Garci" tape. Why can't someone who is the opposite of GMA arise from those ashes?

The mistake is for us to look for someone like that from the ranks of the usual suspects, who are the politicians. Why should it be a politician? Cory was not, but she compelled the politicians to rally around her by the force of what she represented. Enough to compel even Doy Laurel, who imagined himself (completely wrongly) to be Marcos' able-bodied challenger, if not replacement, to give way to her came the snap elections. Don't look for the opposite of GMA from the ranks of the politicians, look for him or her from the ranks of the artists, the teachers, the youth, the poets, the innocent.

The issue is not political, it is moral. The solution is not political, it is moral. Or the first will follow the second.

Don't worry about the organization or the resources or the manpower. If you build it, they will come—said that line in "Field of Dreams." Which is just another way of saying that an idea whose time has come will demand to be fulfilled, will bend everything—even the will of a tyrant—to its will.

Think of this as a full-page ad. Wanted: The Opposite of Gloria.

Ludicrous heights

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

FORMER SEN. FRANCISCO TATAD'S RECENT two-page ad speaks about how the political dynasty issue promises to assume grotesque proportions in the Senate. As he notes, "even in the worst of cases, dynastic family members try simultaneously to occupy as many different offices as possible, or they alternate or rotate in holding on to a particular office." But he stressed, "Never do they sit together in the same office at the same time," such as what three families intend to do this coming election in the Senate. Should they win, says Tatad, the three families would be holding seats equivalent to one-fourth of the Senate. But what's more fearsome is that 12 or eight families could end up controlling all 24 seats—"husbands and wives, together with their sons and daughters, and uncles and aunties, why not, could end up running as one big gang."

* * *

Indeed, the Senate as one big gang is a dreadful prospect we face. A few weeks ago, reelectionist Sen. Ralph Recto was heard over radio asking what's wrong if his wife Vilma Santos also runs for the Senate. The Drilon Liberal Party tried to make Muntinlupa Rep. Rufino Biazon run for the Senate, just to add to its straggling list of candidates; luckily, the young man has enough sense to choose to stay put in his district. If former Sen. Teresa Oreta is drafted by the ruling coalition, she could share the chamber with her nephew, Benigno Aquino III, who'll be an LP candidate.

* * *

Yesterday's Standard Today editorial cited how Sen. Aquilino Pimentel had as late as 2004 termed political dynasties "a terrible indictment of the kind of politics we have." He also said that he does not believe that "any one family has the monopoly of talent to run government." But Pimentel now plans to field his bar-topnotcher son, Aquilino III, for the Senate even as he himself remains there until 2010. The Standard also recalled how Sen. Pia Cayetano once lashed against political dynasties, but now she's saying that since there's still no law against them, her family will field her brother for the Senate, too.

* * *

The dynasty issue promises to reach ludicrous heights in the coming elections, and I can imagine how heartbroken former Sen. Jovito Salonga must feel. In the first Congress after Edsa I, he and a few progressive senators, including, I believe, Senator Pimentel, tried to pass an anti-dynasty law, but it was blocked in both chambers of Congress.

* * *

I laud Tatad's stern indictment of political dynasties, but I question that part of his statement that says he longs for the country's "return of normalcy," where, among other things, "deserving individuals are elected to high office because the office needs them, and not because they need the office." For this reason, says Tatad, "I wanted to see electoral reforms before the parade of celebrities and popular incompetents begins." But it should be stressed, that "parade" had begun way back, culminating in two presidential elections where "celebrities" and "popular incompetents" ran—with one of them winning, and the other nearly. And the wonder is that Tatad unqualifiedly supported both of them, to the chagrin of his friends.

* * *

A report said Filipino nurses are hesitant about going to Japan despite the opening of the job market there for 300-400 nurses a year—because of the language problem. A real fear. But one local executive has the foresight to find a solution. Camarines Sur Gov. L-Ray Villafuerte's province is offering free level 3 and 4 Nihongo classes to qualified applicants in the Bicol region—the only one to do so. In March last year, Villafuerte visited Kobe and Kawanishi in Hyogo Prefecture, Japan, to precisely explore how the Philippines could take advantage of Japan's increasing demand for skilled foreign personnel in medical services. He learned that Hyogo alone has an annual demand for 3,000 caregivers and nurses.

In setting up these language courses, Villafuerte is giving Pinoy workers (whom foreigners acknowledge as so readily trainable) a more competitive edge in the Japanese medical services industry. What I like about this is that it also upgrades the quality of service our people provide abroad. More politicians should concentrate on providing technical training to their constituents, instead of being too preoccupied with divisive partisan politics.

* * *

Retrouvaille, a Catholic ministry that focuses on helping couples with troubled marriages, is again offering a "Retrouvaille Weekend" this coming Friday to Sunday, Feb. 9-11, at the Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road, Tagaytay City. Over the years, I have strongly endorsed this apostolate as it helps strengthen the Filipino family, which is very much under threat nowadays. Many couples whose relationship has floundered, or who have even separated, have been helped by Retrouvaille in saving and reviving their marriage, much to their children's happiness. For details, call Fr. Dave Clay at 0918-9020511 or 523-3361 and 525-0308; Ruby del Castillo, 0918-9232973 or 931-8413, or Nes and Inday Sitaca at 938-9719. All calls will be held in strictest confidence.

* * *

As National Arts Month kicks off today, Dr. Mars Cavestany, the Sydney-based artistic director of Balintataw Film & Theater Arts, and chair of the committee on Outreach & International Partnership with OFWs and Migrant Communities of Unesco-ITI, will have a performance at 7:30 p.m. tonight and tomorrow, Feb. 1 and 2, at Tanghalang Huseng Batute, CCP. Billed "Peregrinations: Unbound, Unmasked, Unzipped," Cavestany's one-man show first opened to the public at the historical Sydney's Old NIDA Fig Tree Theater in Kensington, where Mel Gibson, Cate Blanchett and Geoffrey Rush come from. The local version features famed stage, TV and film actor Miguel Castro as co-actor.

Ateneo's 11

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

That is what we are about .... It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning .... We are prophets of a future that is not our own.—Martyred El Salvador Archbishop Oscar Romero (1917-1980)

IN REVERSE ALPHABETICAL ORDER: MANNY Yap (1951-1976), Nick Solana Jr. (1949-75), Lazzie Silva (1952-75), Ditto Sarmiento (1950-77), Dante Perez (1951-72), Eman Lacaba (1948-78), Edgar Jopson (1948-82), Sonny Hizon (1952-74), Jun Celestial (1950-74), Billy Begg (1959-75), Ferdie Arceo (1952-73).

All so young and so committed. Will there be another generation like theirs? (Yes, like ours, if I may interrupt and interject.) Will there be another call such as they had heard, will there be another harvest such as this special crop?

The book "Living and Dying: In Memory of 11 Ateneo de Manila Martial Law Activists" by Cristina Jayme Montiel tells the story of these young men's individual lives and deaths. It is about the process of their becoming, their journey into the wilderness, and the final shedding and pouring out of their substance—so that others may live abundantly. Their dying was not only a physical one, it was, and more importantly, a dying to self even while they were alive.

Yap who disappeared in 1976 remains missing to this day. Sarmiento, a campus journalist and activist, died at home after suffering in military detention. The nine others died from bullet and torture wounds in the hands of their military pursuers or captors, separately and at different times, far from home, in remote places the faint of heart would fear to tread.

As the poet Lacaba had written:

The road less traveled by we've taken—/And that has made all the difference:/The barefoot army of the wilderness/We should be in time. Awakened, the masses are Messiah,/Here among the workers and peasants our lost/Generation has found its true, its only home.

Captured alive, Lacaba was shot twice—in the mouth and the chest—and tied by the ankles then dragged to a mass grave. Arceo was shot on a seaside in Iloilo. Begg, born an American but who chose Filipino citizenship, met a brutal death in Isabela.

Writes Montiel: "Bill was captured alive. Before killing him, however, the soldiers mercilessly tortured him, leaving him with 17 stab wounds, 11 gunshot wounds, a broken rib cage and smashed hands. The day Bill died marked his third month in the Isabela area, a short five months after he joined the struggle in the countryside. He was 24."

But it has to be stressed that while the moment of death may look dramatic and climactic, it was the trajectory of their lives that provided the substance. This was reflected by the choices they made early on. This was distilled in their thoughts, ideas and ideals (as gleaned from their letters, poems, journals and from the recollection of family, friends and comrades) and, most of all, in the way they lived.

All 11 stories move in almost parallel ways, chronologically, that is, from birth to death. But as a story progresses, one gets tempted to jump pages to get to the heart of things and on to the climax. The uniform, predictable progression makes the stories easy to follow and allows the reader to compare the stories. This must have been deliberate on the part of the writer.

Still I wish the writer had provided some surprise beginnings, rapturous peaks or throat-grabbing denouements at the most unexpected places. Well, simply because the subjects' lives must have been full of cinematic if not dramatic twists and turns. The setting was the worst of times, remember.

But this is not to say that the life stories are bland. They are not. And credit must indeed go to Montiel, professor of Peace/Political Psychology, who bravely embarked on the project. Montiel is coordinator of the doctoral program in Social Organizational Psychology at the Ateneo.

I use the word "bravely" because for Montiel, a known activist during the martial law years, writing the stories meant wading into a difficult past. "I cannot separate myself from this book," Montiel says, "not only because of past personal friendships shared with two of the featured activists, Edjop and Dante, but also because of land mines in my heart that come alive whenever I remember martial law days." At the time she wrote the book, Montiel was just recovering from a long string of both painful and healing experiences. Yes, she bravely enumerates them.

"I was afraid that old psychological and political scripts in the shadows of my heart still battered by martial law would take on life again. Hence I could not go too near the fire, afraid of ignition. I apologize if these 11 stories may lack the personal or political intensity so befitting martial law lives and deaths."

Yes, Tina, I understand and appreciate.

"Living and Dying" is the second in a series of "truth-telling" book projects of the Ateneo. (The first is "Down from the Hill.") And so Montiel so rightly "truth-tells" and takes on this Jesuit institution by pointing out in the stories how several of the Ateneo 11 had been sanctioned, even unceremoniously dismissed, because of their ideological causes.

Well, that is why the book launching was also called a "coming-home ritual," with families of the martyred alumni coming home on behalf of their departed sons, praying and lighting candles with kindred spirits, singing songs and sharing precious memorabilia.

All 10 names, except that of Solana Jr. (data still lacking), are inscribed on the memorial wall of Bantayog ng mga Bayani. But somewhere on Sacred Heart Hill, near the Church of the Iesu in the Ateneo campus, is a marker shaped like an eternal flame. It is in memory of these special young men who gave all. *Ad majorem Dei gloriam.*

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

A coalition and not a force

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

EARLY THIS YEAR, COLLEAGUE BEL CUNANAN said a third force is guaranteed to lose; her fellow traveler, columnist Emil Jurado, chirped along the same lines in his column.

But I beg to differ with them, though of course they've been around far, far longer than I have, and I can personally recall only what I have gleaned from the accounts of their contemporaries and from relevant literature. I do believe the third force in senatorial elections is a venerable political reality and plays a crucial role in politically superheated situations.

In normal circumstances, there's the opposition and the administration, the party in power and the one eager to replace it. But there are times when both the majority and minority parties come to resemble each other too much; and when party identities, which naturally evolve over time, are pressured into evolving even faster by the emergence of a third force.

In 1922, the dominant Nacionalista majority and the Democrata minority were challenged when a splinter from the majority became the first third force, the Collectivistas. This inaugurated a period of change that was only resolved in 1933, when the Democratas merged with the Nacionalista Antis to oppose the Nacionalista Pros. The Collectevistas won in the Senate in 1922; they also won in the House but lacked the numbers to seize power without a coalition; its unhappy reunion with the Nacionalistas meant that with the second split in 1933, they more sensibly coalesced with the Democratas who abolished themselves.

A third force was going to be formalized by President Magsaysay who was exasperated with both the NP and LP; he wanted to set up a new party along the lines of the 1922 and 1933 breakaway parties. But without Magsaysay's charisma and political will, his political heirs suffered a debacle in the 1959 elections. The Grand Alliance, composed of Manuel Manahan, Raul Manglapus and Ambrosio Padilla, were trounced. The administration Nacionalistas obtained five Senate seats, the opposition Liberals (who broke their alliance with the Magsaysay loyalists) won three seats. By all accounts, the two winning parties simply divided the Grand Alliance's votes among themselves.

But the defeated "third force" achieved a kind of posthumous vindication. Its star reformers would dominate the political discussion thereafter until the Marcos era. As shown when Marcos (and the opposition Liberals) received a posthumous slap with the victory, from beyond the grave, of an independent, Gaudencio Antonino in 1967. The point is, a "third force" can be a force of one, or two, or three.

In an era of stronger parties though, ruling parties would retain the House, even if their presidential candidates lost. In 1953, the Magsaysay Nacionalista landslide saw him become president with a Liberal majority in the House; in 1961, Diosdado Macapagal became a Liberal president but with a Nacionalista-dominated House; when he lost to Nacionalista Marcos in 1965, the House elected was ironically Liberal-dominated; and the former parties of presidents dominated the 1992 and 1998 elections where their presidential candidates lost.

I've said I'm instinctively sympathetic to the idea of a third force. But the so-called "third force" today is a traditional coalition; it shouldn't pretend to be different simply because it's more ambivalent about the President. That's not a political virtue, it's old-fashioned pragmatism that looks to 2010 in expectation of being the nucleus of the next party in power.

I strongly feel the opposition deserves credit. If anything's been achieved so far, it's to make doubly difficult an extension of the present administration past 2010 by means of a one-party, unicameral parliament. Still, as we get closer to 2010, the end of the Arroyo era means that we must pay attention to what will come next—which shouldn't involve backsliding to the Estrada years or more of the unedifying style of governance of the present dispensation.

If only the President showed an inclination to purge her administration of its more notorious fixtures and to rededicate herself to democratic ways, I'd say national reconciliation would become an irresistible urge—but that seems an unlikely eventuality, given the fact that the administration refuses to even contemplate turning the coming elections into a clear referendum on itself. At least in public. In private—the leaked briefing Secretary Eduardo Ermita had with government publicists revealed—the Palace knows May is a referendum on two levels: at the House and at the Senate. If the President wins the House but loses the Senate, it's the status quo; if she loses both, her presidency may prematurely end. If she wins both, she's home free—and can preside over "achieving First World status in 20 years."

The conventional wisdom or traditional view is that senatorial elections, particularly during midterms, serve as a referendum on the sitting administration. The voters think similarly—more often than not, generation after generation. Sometimes, as in 1933 and 1967, the result is a decisive showdown. In other years, as in 1967, 1987, 2001 and 2004, there are mixed results. Much has been said recently, though, that regardless of the public's verdict on the Senate, with impeachment being part of the issues raised, the House will be contested, too. And that the administration will retain the House. In any way it has to.

* * *

Jobseekers are invited to join the Blas Ople 80th birthday job fair on Feb. 2, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Activity Center, Market! Market! In Fort Bonifacio. The activity is for the benefit of the Ople Journalism Scholarship Program. Call 8335337 or 83339562 for details or go to www.susanople.com.

Mother's daughter

YOUNG BLOOD

Tina Geronimo Nievera

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

MOTHER'S DAY IS STILL SEVERAL MONTHS AWAY, BUT today I suddenly feel sentimental, thinking about my childhood and my mother. I don't think I have thanked my mother enough or told her I love her often enough.

I'm 28 year old but not too old to be my mother's little princess. I'm a trial lawyer but not knowledgeable enough about my own life to make decisions on my own.

Our relationship has never been the typical mother-daughter relationship. Communication between us from the day I started to think for myself has always been "choppy" or the "cannot be reached" sort of thing. There have been no easy and spontaneous demonstrations of love like hugs and kisses or praises for little achievements in school. And I was hungry for them. I cannot remember trying to show to my mother my own feelings for her with hugs and kisses or by saying "I love you" for whatever she did for me. I couldn't; I froze at the very thought of doing so. *Baka, mapahiya ako.* Besides, there was my baby brother who was and will always be the apple of her eye.

Most of the memories I have as a child revolve around my grandmother who took care of me during most of my formative years. Because my mother was busy with her work, she was a vague and ambiguous figure to me, although I knew I came out of her womb.

No love was lost (or won) between my mother and me. I have always been the rebellious, free spirited, independent type. I probably had to dig deep into my innermost strengths to endure a childhood without feeling loved by her. I became willful, competitive and ambitious. I thought that since my "Inang" (grandmother) loved me so much, nothing else mattered.

To project that I was unaffected by this distance between my mother and me, I focused on doing well in my studies while secretly wanting to know and hear how proud she was of me. I often found myself imagining loving scenes between my mother and me, such as a sentimental reunion when I visited her or a simple "*Kamusta ka?*" when I called home.

At 28, I am a very tired human being, tired of putting up walls around me to protect my very emotional heart and constantly reinforcing them so that no cracks would show and so that my mother would never notice them even if they were right in front of her.

Fighting with my mother, both in person or on the phone, has become routine. The reasons for our squabbles range from simple to complex things involving my life. Ironically, I feel closer to her whenever we fight because that's the only time she really expresses her feelings, no matter how negative, and then I get to glimpse her heart and soul.

What do we fight about? Mostly about my "lack of time" for her, like not being home during my free time or spending it with someone else. Lately, we have been fighting more about the person who found me and who has recently become the person I think I will marry.

During one of our ugliest fights, my mother demanded in her hair-raising voice that I choose between her and this person whom she said she would never accept (for whatever reason, she only knows). Many hurtful words were exchanged between us that night. To me, it seemed like a tsunami that had been held back for more than 20 years had broken the walls I had carefully built. And yet I let myself lose that round, realizing that I owed her my life and what I was.

I thought I couldn't have hurt her more seriously and so I moved out of my mother's house despite the strong objections of other members of our extended family. By that act, I was told, I was choosing a "stranger" over my own mother. What kind of person was I? How could I love somebody more than my own mother, my flesh and blood?

But I didn't choose anyone over her. We just both needed space.

Old wounds heal, but only after a very long time. There are wounds that have scarred me and left me unable to feel. But I feel no resentment toward my mother because even if I can never be the person she wants me to be, I know we are so much alike. She is proud as I am proud. She is strong as I am strong. She is weak as I am weak. Probably we are too much alike and we don't even realize that the likeness can no longer be disguised by the fights we have.

I am what I am today not because of the strength I imagined I had deep inside me, but because God has given me the same character traits my mother has. I am her daughter, albeit an improved version of her.

I know and recognize the sacrifices and hardships that she went through to put me through school. I know how hard it was for her to put up with me and my insensitive nature. I cannot tell her enough how grateful I am, even if she thinks everything I do confirms her belief that I am an ungrateful child. I cannot ask for her forgiveness enough, but I am truly sorry for whatever hurt, pain and suffering I have caused her. I cannot tell her I love her enough, because our differences always seem bigger than both of us. But I am most grateful and, in all humility, I ask for her forgiveness and I declare that I love her so much.

Her worst fear is that I might live an unhappy life as she perceives her own to be an unhappy one. I pray constantly that she will find happiness and peace of mind, while she prays constantly that I will find the right partner. But I will find the right partner and live a happy life, because she has taught me many things that I didn't recognize to be useful then but do now. I will, because God has kept her and me together for more than 20 years.

Despite our differences, I am my mother's daughter. And every day is Mother's Day because not a day passes when I don't think of her.

Tina Geronimo Nievera, 28, is a trial lawyer.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

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Pandoy, 'Bangkang Papel' in the form of a House bill

THE P125 WAGE HIKE IS ACtually Mang Pandoy and the "Bangkang Papel" kids (remember the mascots of two presidential candidates wooing the "*masa*" support?) in the form of a House bill.

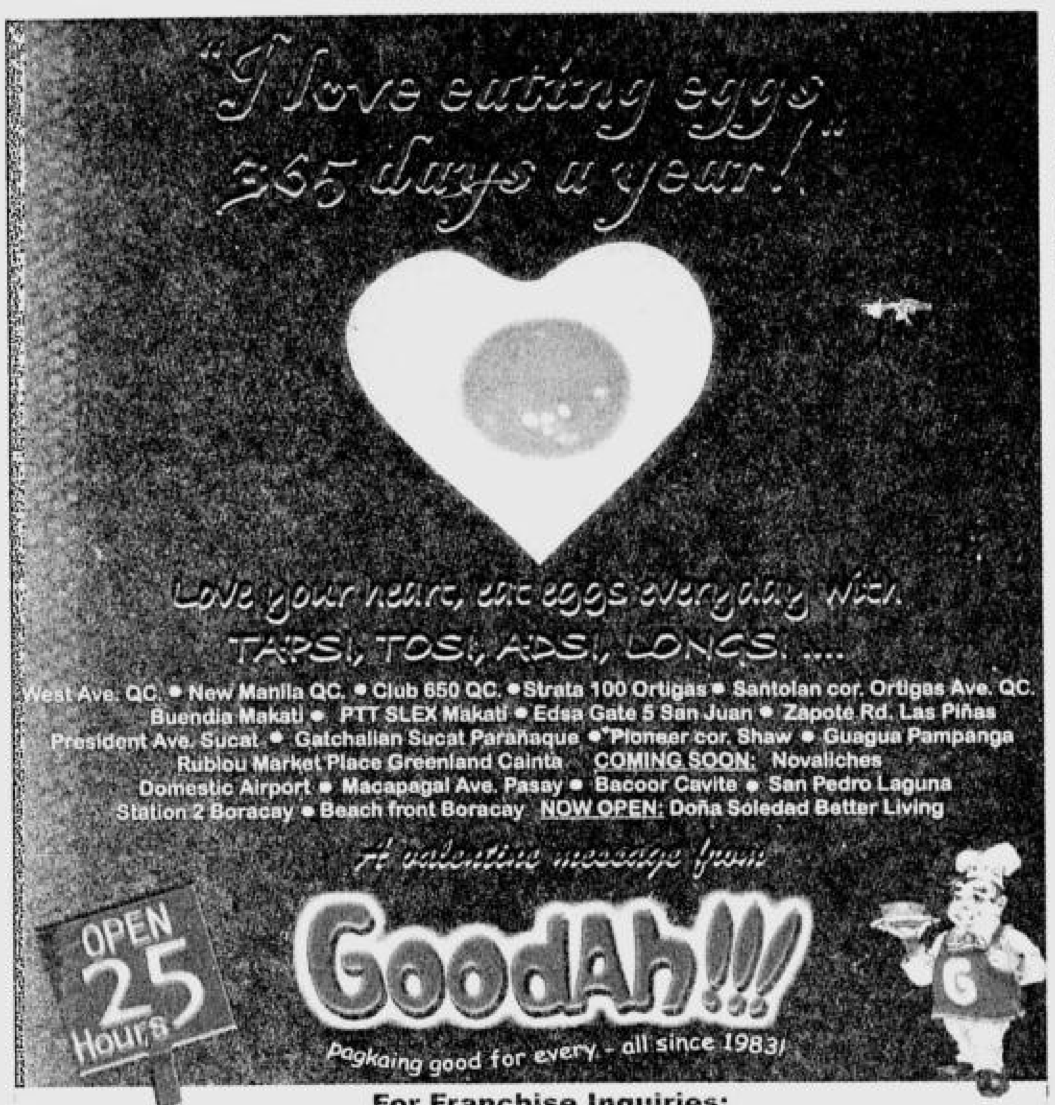
How Malacañang and both chambers of Congress are treating it—like a yucky-smelling rotting fish—speaks volumes of the empty campaign rhetoric of elitist politicians and of their contempt for the masses.

Authored by legislators whom the two Gonzaleses of the Arroyo administration like to call "commies," the wage hike bill is a statement against this country's system of legislation, which is biased against the working class.

The argument that the economy will collapse with a legislated wage hike only shows a kind of fear that is real only in the benighted minds of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her minions. They were even wrong about the thinking of the foreign chambers of commerce, which jointly protested not only against the political killings but also against the Arroyo administration's policy of union-busting.

For once let us take seriously one of the clearest policy embodiment of what Mang Pandoy and the Bangkang Papel kids really need.

—FERDINAND ANNO,
Theology and Religious Studies,
The University of Leeds,
Leeds, LS2 9JT, UK



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Christians, Muslims up to the challenge

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT should be wary of what's happening in Iraq and the Philippines. With the fall of Saddam Hussein, a civil war appears to have flared up in Iraq. It was Saddam who could unite the warring factions of the Sunnis, Shiites and the Kurds. It was also the late Yasser Arafat who could at least resolve the infighting between the Fatah and Hamas among the Palestinians.

In Mindanao, the Ramos administration successfully made peace with the Moro National Liberation Front; but the negotiation between the Philippine government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front is far from achieving peace despite the intervention of the Malaysian and US governments. The MILF, asking for the control of its so-called "ancestral domain," is like asking for the moon.

Everyone who is from Mindanao knows that there are more Christians than Muslims on that island, but they have co-existed for a long time due to their leaders' spirit of understanding and magnanimity. The conflict between them arose when the Jabidah massacre and the attempt to take over Sabah were exposed. It emboldened enemies of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos to make a deal with the Malaysian government. The rest is history.

I believe that we don't need foreign observers to meddle in our own internal affairs. Our political leaders, Christians and Muslims, can handle the problem with the support of our thinkers in the Armed Forces of the Philippines. If Malaysia and the United States are sincere in helping us, the promised aid and support should pass our government agencies. We should not give the MILF a status of belligerency. If we're not careful, the balkanization of Mindanao is in the offing due to betrayed commitments.

—DR. ERICK SAN JUAN,
Banco de Oro Plaza,
8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

Incisive but one-sided and speculative

WE READ WITH MUCH INTEREST Conrad Banal III's column titled "Game's bond." (PDI, 1/11/07)

The way he handles issues affecting the power industry, especially the National Power Corp., always amazes us. His in-depth treatment and discussion of the issues give us the opportunity to view things from a different perspective. Indeed, we value his opinions, and those of others like him who take time and energy to write extensively about the power industry. But most importantly, Banal gives us in Napocor an opening to present our side of the story, on the basis of facts, not hearsay or speculations.

We are glad that Banal himself, despite his misplaced enthusiasm, acknowledged the fact that the latest bond float by Napocor was a success because it was swamped by bidders, as a result of which, the interest rates turned out lower than expected. Truth be told, it was one of the most successful bond issuances made by Napocor over the past two years.

The overwhelming market response and the oversubscription (which was approved by the Department of Finance) are a reflection of the confidence that the finance market has in Napocor.

Overall, what does this mean for the country? This means that the country now enjoys a good deal of confidence from investors who are willing to put their valued resources into the Philippines, into the power industry, into Napocor. It enhances the value of Napocor's generation assets. It affirms that the programs we have been implementing over the years have been successful and that we have greatly improved efficiencies in our operations.

Likewise, the success of this bond float is a tribute to the commitment of the more than 4,000 men and women of Napocor who made Napocor what it is today; and who continue to work very hard to provide the country with the best possible service.

May I reiterate that our operations have always been aboveboard and compliant with all laws, regulations, executive orders and directives. And we can back up this claim with facts, with documents and with records. Napocor goes through a regular, rigid internal and external audit, the latter done by the Commission on Audit.

Those who write about irregularities in our operations are just speculating. As we have said before, we invite them to come out with proofs of their allegations. And for the record, documents will show that the government did not buy any of the bonds offered.

Again, we wish to thank Banal for an incisive discussion of the issues he raised. His opinion, though, is just one of many that are highly speculative at best, and baseless at worst. Unfortunately, he did not give us the opportunity to present our side.

May we invite Banal and the public to visit our website at www.napocor.gov.ph, should they need more information about our operations.

—DENNIS S. GANA,
manager,
corporate communication,
National Power Corp.,
Quezon Avenue cor. BIR Road,
Diliman, Quezon City

An urgent appeal to the SSS

AS ONE WHO WENT TO SCHOOL up to Grade 4 only, I had a hard time complying with the requirements of the Social Security System in connection with the death benefit of my late husband, Catalino Romero (SSS No. 07-0192884-7).

As an SSS pensioner, he died in Caloocan City on Sept. 25, 2003 while we were on vacation there. Immediately, I filed a claim for my survivorship pension. I went home to Cadiz City, Negros Occidental without waiting for the approval of my application. But somehow I managed to arrange for the continued processing of the SSS claim I filed in SSS Diliman. Now is the fourth year that my claim has been pending. Its approval has been delayed due to the voluminous documentation required.

While I am waiting for my claim's approval, I am also getting older and sickly. Now 78 years old, I frankly feel that I will not last long. But before I die, I will be profusely thankful to the SSS if it can hasten the processing of my claim.

—ENCARNACION ROMERO,
Hda. Elvira, Barangay A. Bonifacio,
Cadiz City, Negros Occidental

Why can't I come home?

- Ninoy Aquino

Dare to ask.
Be an Inquirer.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Strong Cities for a Strong Republic

A Call for Reason and Respect for Law

The **LEAGUE OF CITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES** is expressing its vehement objections to the purported move by the Senate to pass the 12 city hood bills of municipalities which did not meet the requirements provided for in the Local Government Code of 1991 as amended by Republic Act 9009.

Republic Act 9009, which took effect on June 30, 2001, increased the income requirement for the conversion of municipalities to cities. By increasing the income requirement from P20 million to P100 million locally-generated income based on CY 2000 constant prices, the authors of what was then Senate Bill No. 2157 and which is now RA 9009, have set the appropriate fiscal benchmark by which to determine the readiness, viability, and preparedness of a municipality to take on the roles, functions and responsibilities of a city.

The League of Cities of the Philippines would like to profess that we feel neither abhorrence nor rejection over any initiative on the part of a municipality to be converted into a city. However, what we strongly object is the conversion of a municipality that is not yet, by itself, prepared to become a city. Three municipalities (Taguig, Sta. Rosa, and Meycauayan) have been converted into cities after the passage of RA 9009. The League of Cities of the Philippines did not object to these considering that they satisfied the requirements of RA 9009.

Being a city is a serious business, a fact that was established in the Local Government Code of 1991 and further strengthened by the passage of RA 9009. To now turn a blind eye on the noble intentions of the law is tantamount to obliterating its letter and delivering a fatal blow to its spirit.

The passage of these 12 cityhood bills would create a very dangerous precedent. For whatever legal and rational reasons that have been long established through the brilliant minds of our legislators, there is nothing to prevent other municipalities from seeking the same “special treatment” by invoking the constitutional mandate of “equal protection of laws.”

If these municipalities cannot even manage to meet the basic income requirement, how can they be expected to perform and deliver as cities? There may even be other municipalities that are better qualified and the bills only discriminate against them. This only leads us to think that the vested interests of a few are the only ingredients needed to derail a sensible and rational Law.

We have been lobbying our position with the Senate for years, asking for neither special treatment nor exemption. What we ask is that the Law be upheld and respected. We would like to believe that our noble Senators feel the same.

The League of Cities of the Philippines together with all of its constituents are closely observing the conduct of Senate deliberations on this matter and pray that the Honorable members of the Senate will individually act on the issue with reason and respect for the law.

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Historian's granddaughter fights for Legazpi's heritage

By Ephraim Aguilar
Legazpi City

PEOPLE ARE USUALLY NONCHALANT about preserving their heritage, but for Dr. Erlinda Gonzales-Belleza, 63, taking care of Legazpi City's relics and book collection is a basic thing to do.

Belleza's love for culture could have been inherited from her grandfather, Don Mariano Goyena del Prado, a Spaniard who was then a *capitan de municipal* (equivalent to city mayor) of Legazpi and historian known as the "Grand Old Man of Bicol Culture."

Del Prado wrote the Bicol history book "Ibalon" in Spanish, now one of the rare books in the National Library.

He was also responsible for the identification of local and historical spots, and the public observance of important historical dates.

But beyond tending the Legazpi City Museum and Library every day, Belleza also carries out a mission to enlighten people about the value of preserving their waning heritage, which, she would say, is the primary key to the city's progress.

Bothered

Belleza, a museum curator since 2000 and was instrumental in its establishment in 1993, said she was bothered by the people's lack of awareness of the significance of the city's artifacts and records, and of keeping intact their culture that made them unique.

DR. ERLINDA Gonzales-Belleza, curator of the Legazpi City Museum and Library, inspects the historic Liberty Bell. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

In the midst of infrastructure facilities that have sprung up in Legazpi to beef up tourist arrivals and improve the local economy, Belleza maintained that any form of tourism was essentially "cultural."

She said the Bicolanos should shy away from the "4-S" of popular tourism—sun, sea, sand and sex—and should first focus on keeping what made their place unique in terms of its history and culture.

"Our visitors should experience who we really are and what we eat and drink. Instead of bringing them to restaurants offering foreign delicacies, why not let them eat our own *pinangat* or drink our own *tinutong na bagas* (rice coffee)? Our primary motivation should not be to please them but to earnestly impart to them our real own," Belleza said.

Not many establishments in the city promote the unique Bicol culture. Instead, they are but imitations with traces of outside influence, she noted.

Relics ruined

Belleza could only lament that some people were misguided by wrong development mindsets.

"I've long been accused of being 'antidevelopment' for fighting the destruction of old historical landmarks in the city, which is still a threat to other remaining historical sites," she said.

When the Peñaranda Park at the center of City Hall, the Capitol and St. Gregory the Great Parish in Old Albay District was renovated by the provincial government in 2001, three of the city's historical landmarks vanished.

First was the Liberty Bell, a gift given by the Americans to the Albayanos on April 1, 1945. Inscribed in it were the words of the Americans to the people of Albay: "Individually or collectively, if oppression ever knocks at your door, feel free to ring this bell."

Belleza said the Liberty Bell, which was a replica of the American Liberty Bell at the Independence Hall in Philadelphia, was not just the symbol of Albay's liberation from the Japanese but that of the whole Bicol.

Albay was the starting point of the region's liberation through the Albay Gulf in Barangay Rawis on April 1, 1945.

The bell was replaced with a fake. The real one is now in the protective custody of the museum.

Monuments

Another case is the Peñaranda Monument, an obelisk erected in 1854 in honor of Albay Gov. Jose Ma. Peñaranda, who served on 1834-40. Through Peñaranda's encouragement of agriculture and industry, Albay was transformed into one of the most progressive provinces.

After his term, the government structures of bamboo and thatch were replaced with sturdy rubble and lime. New roads were laid out and rubble bridges built.

Belleza said Peñaranda was also responsible for the opening of public highways and postal routes in northern and southern Luzon.

The concrete marker, placed on Dec. 15, 1948 and containing the names of the early city officials, was also destroyed.

On Jan. 11, 2002, Belleza wrote a letter to the National Historical Institute, asking for comment, recommendation and intervention on the redevelopment of the park.

"Despite warnings of the National Historical Institute to our local officials after I wrote the letter, they did not listen and still did what they wanted," Belleza said.

Lastly, the Headless Monument, which was originally built near the port, was transferred to the Post Office compound because it was being desecrated by slumdwellers, who would tie ropes on it to hang their laundry.

The monument was built by Don Buenaventura de Erquiaga, the philanthropist founder of Legazpi College, in memory of the Bicolanos who suffered atrocities during the Japanese occupation.

Belleza said that according to urban tales, the Headless Monument was a man who carried sacks of copra unloaded from the ships at the port. He was beheaded by the Japanese soldiers when he was found to be "stealing."

Kapuntukan Hill

Now, Belleza is still closely watching the developments that could lead to the destruction of historical and cultural sites. One of them is the ongoing reconstruction of the boulevard area that might destroy the rustic structure of the Kapuntukan Hill rising above the central business district.

The structure, strategically located at the coast of Albay Gulf, had served as lookout post against invaders.

"I have nothing against building new facilities and structures. They can build anything they want for as long as the original historical and cultural elements of the place remain untouched and preserved," Belleza said.

She said she felt glad that, finally, the city included in its 2007 priority plans the putting up of a separate building to house the new Bicol Museum. She hoped it would be given funding and realized.

At present, the museum and library occupies a 339-square-meter hall at the back of City Hall. Last year, 9,192 people visited the museum and 1,383 went to the library.

The existence of a good museum and a library implies that the place is progressive, Belleza said.

She also saw the need to rewrite and reorganize Bicol history, this time, from the point of view of a Bicolano.

She called on people to give facts and donate antiques and memorabilia about Bicol's heroes to the museum.

DR. CARMELO Roco, a past president of the PMSNC, looks after a patient during the medical mission in Naga City. JUAN ESCANDOR JR.

Fil-Am doctors bridge cultures to serve poor

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Naga City

FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS, Waldemar Perner, a German realtor living in California and married to a Filipina doctor from Batangas, has been joining missions of the Philippine Medical Society in Northern California (PMSNC) to the Philippines.

Perner, in his late 50s, said he was forced to shed several pounds so he could enjoy the visit and travel to other parts of the country.

"I always have a problem riding in a tricycle. I can hardly fit in so I have to lose pounds. Being big in the Philippines is somewhat disadvantageous because the common means of transportation in towns are tricycles." he said.

This year, the PMSNC, which is composed of Filipino-American doctors, came to Naga City. Again, Perner went with the 300-member delegation to discover a new place. He was one of dozens of non-Filipino-Americans, who included American citizens of Asian descent.

The delegation stayed on Jan. 14-20.

Like the rest of the medical mission, Perner and his wife paid for their travel. Both took leave from work to bring medical services, equipment and medicine for 10,000 patients.

"It's my wife who has a serious task in the medical mission. I accompany the medical mission but spend most of my time discovering people and places," the immigrant confessed.

Last year, Perner said he was in Roxas City where the medical mission was conducted. Seeing thousands of people line up every day to seek medical help overwhelmed him.

He said he felt good joining humanitarian missions and was proud to help improve other people's lives.

"I love this place and the people. I will always come back to the Philippines. And maybe, spend my retirement here," Perner said.

Involvement

Patrick Perky, district manager of a big pharmaceutical company, expressed reverence for being associated with Filipinos here and in his neighborhood in the Bay Area in Los Angeles.

Through the PMSNC, Perky came to know of Filipino-Americans in Los Angeles and learned to love Filipino cuisine, "every bit of it."

"They are the best people I've met," he declared unabashedly.

He enjoyed sharing his first community immersion experience in Naga so much that he decided to walk alone, one hour each to the southern, northern and western parts of the city.

He observed the same warm qualities of Filipinos in California in the people he met on the streets.

Perky said he was drawn to the Filipinos in the Bay through Dr. Carmelo Roco, the 2005 president of the PMSNC, who he described as a "caring doctor" with overflowing patients of varied nationalities.

'More with less'

Roco said the PMSNC had about 200 doctors, mostly private practitioners.

Naga Mayor Jesse Robredo said the city had established a network with Philippine medical associations in the US to tap their services. "We always want to do more with less," he said.

Aside from free medical services, the Philippine medical societies from the United States donate medicines and medical equipment for the delivery of basic health services of the city government, he said.

Last year, he said, the Philippine Medical Society in Chicago conducted a comprehensive medical mission for five days in Naga.

Irwin Jose, who has been doing liaison work for the PMSNC for the past 28 years, said the group donated about P3 million worth of medicines and medical equipment that it bought from proceeds of its fund-raising activities in the US.

Roco, also an internist and cousin of the late Sen. Raul S. Roco, described the medical mission as a small contribution to uplift the lives of indigent patients, but its value was priceless because it honestly came from the heart.

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Clashes keep children out of school

A GIRL, who fled the fighting between Moro guerrillas and government militiamen, tries to seek shelter beside a post of an evacuation center in Midsayap, North Cotabato. DENNIS JAY SANTOS/INQUIRER MINDANAO

MIDSAYAP, NORTH COTABATO—THERE ARE NO students in the classrooms of this town, but evacuees.

Parents refuse to send their children to school, forcing authorities to suspend classes in three villages, where clashes continued between government militiamen and Moro guerrillas despite a ceasefire agreement.

The classes have been suspended for three days now and classrooms have been turned to evacuation centers for about 6,000 people who fled the fighting.

While the fighting has been confined to what authorities like to call pocket skirmishes, it continued to strike fear among villagers.

The clashes were reduced to skirmishes when government officials and Moro Islamic Liberation Front leaders stepped in to work out a truce.

But it didn't hold. Gunfire continued to be heard in some parts of the town.

The MILF said the violence, which has threatened the fragile ceasefire between the government and the separatist guerrillas, emanated from a long-standing land conflict.

Efren Mantawil, school district supervisor, said that aside from the villages of Rangaban, Mudsing and Sambolawan, classes were suspended in nearby areas because school buildings were being used as shelters for the more than 6,000 people displaced by three days of fighting.

At least three rebels and three militiamen were killed while two soldiers were wounded in the clashes.

"Once the situation returns to normal, we will resume classes," Mantawil said.

Mayor Romeo Araña said that aside from children missing their classes, officials were concerned they could not feed the evacuees.

"Worse, if the evacuees continue to refuse to return home, we would be concerned with their health conditions," he said.

Araña said that what the evacuees wanted was an assurance that the warring parties would not engage in armed confrontation again.

"These people want to see the localized truce become effective and functional before they would return home," he said. *Edwin Fernandez, Jeoffrey Maitem and Jeffrey Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao*

LATEBREAKER

Moro Islamic Liberation Front guerrillas abducted a resident of Rangaban Village in Midsayap, North Cotabato, on suspicion of being a military informant, the Armed Forces reported yesterday.

Bishop says 'jueteng' behind GMA backing of Bong Pineda wife

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon
and Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—LINGAYEN-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said he was not at all surprised by the decision of President Macapagal-Arroyo's party to pick the wife of suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda as its official candidate for Pampanga governor.

"That is understandable because [Pampanga Board Member Lilia] Pineda has all the millions needed not only for her [own] campaign but also for the campaign of the administration's candidates," Cruz said in a telephone interview on Wednesday.

Cruz, national chair of the Krusada ng Bayan Laban sa Sugal, said Lilia Pineda's endorsement by the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) was proof that the coming elections will be under the control of jueteng operators.

"The selection of Mrs. Pineda is proof that jueteng lords' money has much say in the workings of the administration," he said.

He said the decision showed the clout of the Pinedas in the Arroyo administration.

"After all, Ms Arroyo and Ms Pineda are '*magkumare*,'" Cruz said.

As far as the Krusada's campaign against candidates perceived to be involved in jueteng operations, Cruz said Lilia Pineda had nothing to worry about "because the Krusada could not establish any chapter in Pampanga."

"The board of Krusada tried very hard to look for people and ask for individuals who would head the chapter [in Pampanga], but no one accepted until now. So she has absolutely nothing to worry about," he said.

Pampanga is the only province where Krusada has not been established, he said.

In Pampanga, an official of the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said Kampi chose Pineda to "mobilize, maximize and monopolize" illegal gambling funds for the administration's candidates in the elections.

The choice of Pineda came two months after 14 mayors broke off with Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid and his son, Gov. Mark Lapid, and moved to the Kampi over the Lapids' refusal to take Lubao Mayor Dennis Pineda, the Pinedas' only son, as Mark's running mate.

Dennis is Ms Arroyo's wedding godson.

Lilia Pineda, 55, said she decided to run to heed the clamor of local officials and to end the poor governance of the younger Lapid.

As Pineda and her allies barraged the Lapids with allegations of wrongdoing, the other camp responded with silence.

Lilia Pineda yesterday denied having had any role in the controversial 2004 elections. She also defended her husband, saying he had been cleared by a court in 1998 over a case of corrupting public officials through jueteng.

The Senate investigated jueteng in 2000 and 2005 but Pineda said no charges against her husband came out of it.

In Pampanga, no vocal opposition—not even from the archdiocese of San Fernando or business groups—has surfaced against the candidacy of Lilia Pineda.

LILIA Pineda and her running mate, Yeng Guiao, present documents that they said would prove the graft charges they were filing against Pampanga Gov. Mark Lapid. JOAN BONDOC

Fix ramshackle Comelec offices first, gov't told

SORSOGON CITY—THE GOVERNMENT must first ensure that the Commission on Elections has functional offices nationwide before it even talks of computerized elections.

This was the reaction of the top election official in the province of Sorsogon to an ongoing debate over the implementation of the Election Computerization Law.

Lawyer Romeo Fortes, provincial election supervisor, said the government must first look at the condition of municipal election offices.

Fortes said many municipal election officers are "squatters" and many of them have dilapidated offices.

The election official said in the town of Pilar, the election officer holds office under the stairs while the election officer in Barcelona town has a 2 meter by 3 meter office space, which is hardly enough to hold election supplies.

"These are not isolated cases but instead a common problem among election offices," he said.

Fortes said that if the government would computerize elections, it would require big offices for computers.

It was learned that local government units would provide offices to election officials.

Fortes said computerizing elections would also require proper training and computer education, not only for election officials but also for voters. This, he said, would take time.

He said the haphazard enforcement of the computerization law might just be a waste of government funds.

He also suggested voter's education be included in school curriculums from the elementary to the college levels.

Fortes said the rights and obligations of a voter could be taught in higher elementary grades and high school while the technicality of the computerized voting process could be included as a college subject. *Bobby Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

DOTC focuses on 6 North Luzon airports

By Riza T. Olchondra

SIX AIRPORTS IN NORTHERN Luzon were tagged priority projects by the Department of Transportation and Communications in connection with the government's super regions program, according to a DOTC report.

The report, made by Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, said the department was focusing on the development of the government's super regions to accelerate the economic development of the country.

Airport projects

Mendoza said the six airport projects are Basco and Itbayat airports, both in Batanes; Bagabag airport in Nueva Vizcaya; Lallo airport in Cagayan; Casiguran airport in Aurora; and the Poro Point International Airport in La Union.

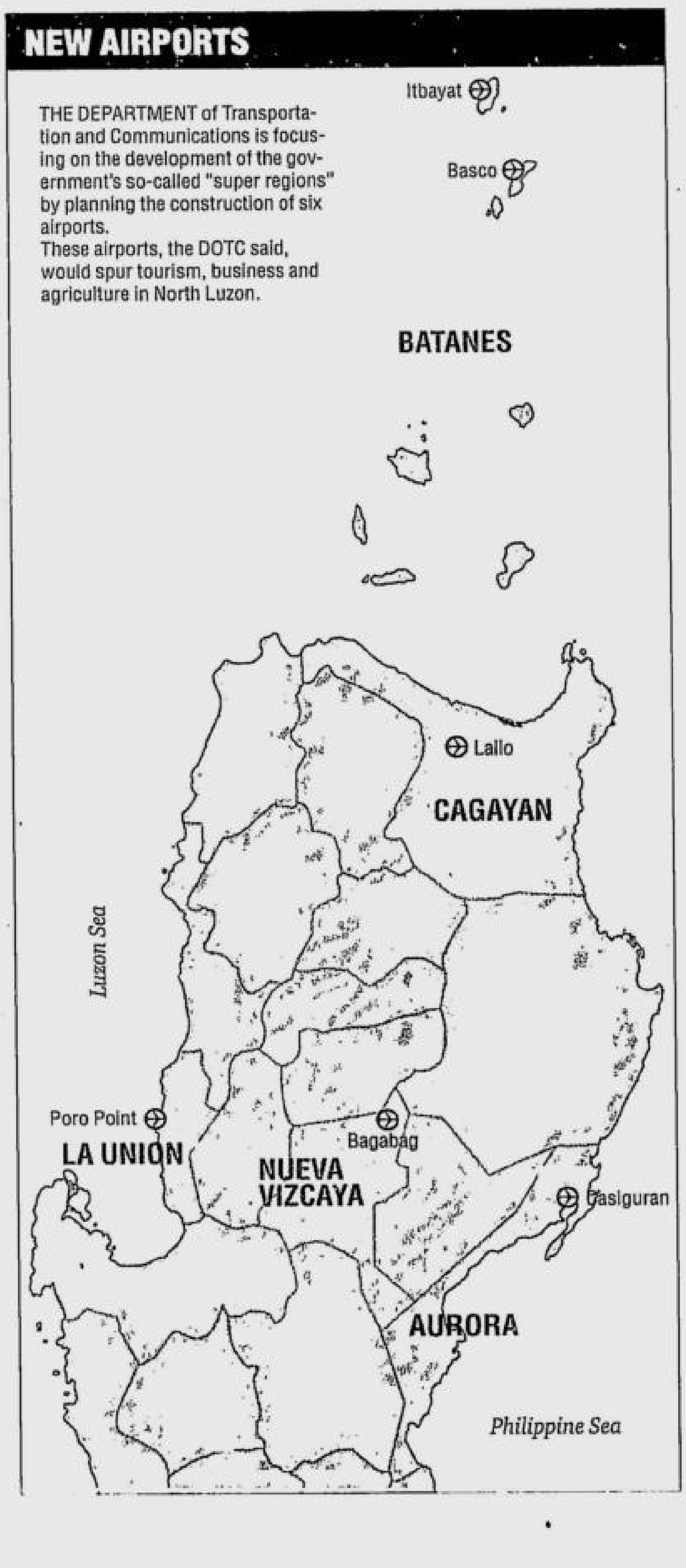
Mendoza said the six airports would encourage tourism, business, agricultural and industrial development in North Luzon.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier urged the DOTC to "remain steadfast" in its task of developing airports in the super regions.

The Basco project is scheduled for implementation from May 2007 to June 2008, Itbayat from May 2007 to June 2008, Bagabag from March 2007 to December 2008, Lallo Airport from December 2007 to July 2009, Casiguran Airport in February.

The Poro Point International Airport in La Union was scheduled for bidding this month. Its design was completed last Jan. 5.

NEW AIRPORTS



THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communications is focusing on the development of the government's so-called "super regions" by planning the construction of six airports.
These airports, the DOTC said, would spur tourism, business and agriculture in North Luzon.

Coliform discovered in town water supply

By Chito Fuentes
Inquirer Visayas

LOON, BOHOL—GOVERNMENT health authorities found coliform contamination in two pumping stations of this town's water supplier that could be the cause of an outbreak of diarrhea here.

A team from the National Epidemiology Center (NEC) of the Department of Health said two pumping stations of the Loon Waterworks System (LWS) were contaminated with coliform.

The report, prepared by doctors Edwin Mayor, Eleanor Repatacodo and Joy Althea Pabellong, said 70 percent of the residents who were struck by diarrhea got their water from the LWS.

The report said the contamination could have been caused by lack of chlorination. The LWS pipes, they said, could also have been exposed to contaminants after these were damaged in the course of an ongoing road-widening project.

The NEC team said 408 diarrhea cases came from this town.

It said rains continued in the town for three weeks and diggings for a road-widening project exposed water pipes to dirt and other contaminants.

"Temporary pipes were put in place which were exposed to possible contamination," said the team's report. "It (is) possible that during replacement of the damaged pipes, rain water seeped through the system."

It added that the LWS failed to monitor the quality of the water that it supplies to this town's households.

Davao council OKs ordinance protecting city watersheds

DAVAO CITY—THE CITY COUNCIL on Tuesday unanimously approved an ordinance aimed at strengthening efforts to protect the city's watersheds.

Among the city's major watersheds are Talomo-Lipadas and Panigan-Tamugan.

The approval of the ordinance, authored by Councilor Arnolfo Ricardo Cabling, came in the wake of calls from non-government organizations (NGOs) to ban activities in the watersheds and the release of a study by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) warning of a water shortage here.

The ordinance, now known as the city's Watershed Code, adopted the terrain analysis and studies conducted by the city government and the DENR's Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB).

At least 34,254 hectares have been identified as conservation areas while at least 12,240 hectares were identified as forests and areas not for agriculture.

The code prohibits the conversion of land classified as conservation areas for commercial or agriculture use. Parts of conservation areas may be used for facilities for research, however.

Water drilling, all forms of agricultural activities, hunting, destroying and disturbing, or mere possession, of any plant, animal or product derived without permit from conservation areas are now punishable.

In areas where farming is allowed, land conversion is prohibited but agriculture-based businesses may be allowed if covered by environmental clearance certificates.

The code also establishes the Watershed Management Council, which will oversee its implementation. The council will be composed of representatives from various sectors. *Rizalene Acac, Inquirer Mindanao*

Mendoza, Dysangco rule Clark duathlon

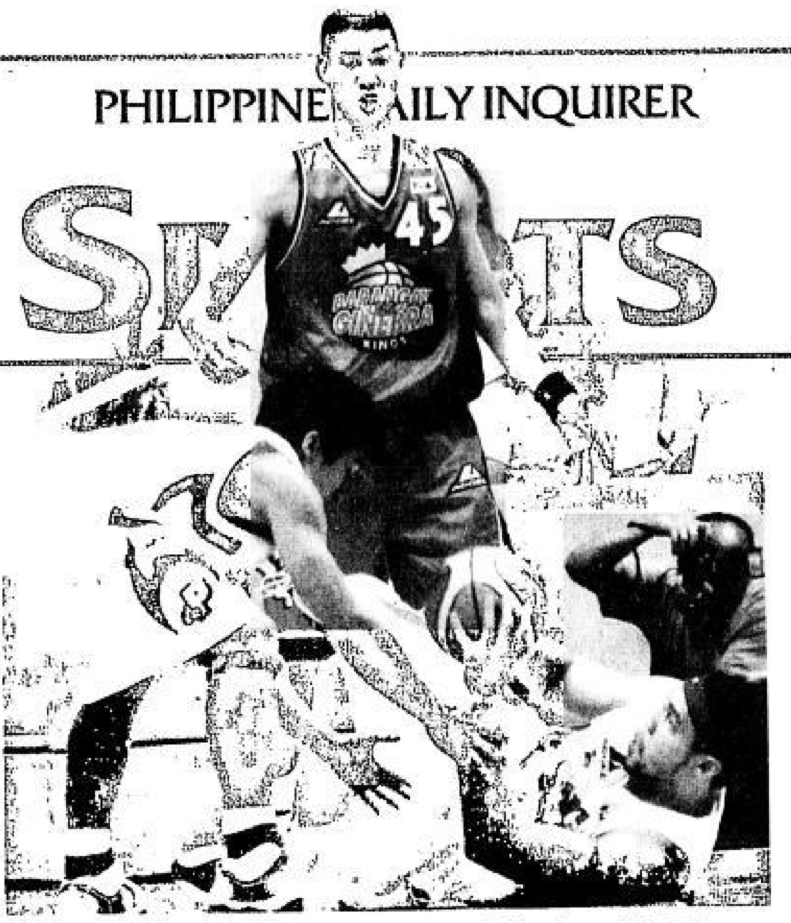
REIGNING NATIONAL AND ASIAN duathlon king Ryan Mendoza kept his unbeaten streak by ruling yesterday's initial leg of the Clark 2007 Sprint Duathlon Series in Pampanga.

The 30-year-old Mendoza, a recipient of a PSA citation for 2006 for his Asian championship victory, built a solid lead in the 30K bike leg and coasted in the final 5K run to win in one hour 18 minutes and 21 seconds.

He is eyeing a repeat in this year's Asian Championship in Thailand and is a favorite to win the gold in the duathlon event which will make its debut in the 2007 Southeast Asian Games in Thailand.

In the women's side, 19-year-old out-of-school youth and Angeles City native Annalisa Dysangco, a member of the national pool, ruled the 8-woman field in an impressive manner.

Dysangco kept pace with veteran Popo Nagtalon in the 5K run but pulled away in the bike leg and went to finish in 1:39:13.



TALK 'N Text's Patrick Fran (second from left) tries to help fallen teammate Harvey Carey control the loose ball while Ginebra's Mike Holper look on.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Ginebra, Red Bull tie series

GAMES TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Red Bull vs San Miguel
7:20 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Talk 'N Text

By Musong R. Castillo

YOU CAN SAY THAT MARK Caguioa made up for some lost time.

Held scoreless in the fourth quarter of a Game 3 defeat, the 6-foot firebrand scored 16 in the final period last night, anchoring Barangay Ginebra to a 110-103 victory over Talk 'N Text and a 2-2 tie in their Philippine Cup semifinal series at the Araneta Coliseum.

The tournament's leading scorer actually dropped a total of 26 in the final two periods and 35 for the game as the Gin Kings got their running game humming in all cylinders in that stretch to win convincingly and reduce the series to a race-to-two affair.

"It doesn't matter if I score two points, as long as we win," said Caguioa, who's had some of his greatest scoring nights against the Phone Pals, but saw a string of 30-plus points a game against TNT snapped at four after just 26 on Sunday.

"I'll do whatever it takes for us to win."

In a game which coach Yeng Guiao described as "against all odds" and a "test of their manhood," Red Bull escaped with a 109-107 win after Mick Pennisi hit a triple from the right flank with 6.3 seconds left for a similar 2-2 deadlock with San Miguel.

"It was just grim determination for the boys to win," Guiao said. "We weren't getting any breaks from the refs so we had to do it ourselves. It's not about the physicality (that this series has become) but about our manhood.

"*Pinatunayan namin ang pagkalalaki namin* (We proved our manhood)," Guiao, in a somber tone, added. "*Ayaw namin maging* (Danny) Ildefonso *at* (Romel) Adducul, *hindi kami makikipag-angasan sa kabila.* (We don't want to be like Danny and Romel, we don't want to start bullying the other side."

Late Sports

More Sports stories on A23 to 26

Red Bull, which lost Game 3 in a lopsided way, did work hard, losing a 12-point lead in the first half to trail by nine in the third and five with 1:52 left after an LA Tenorio triple.

"We feel that this (win) could be the turning point," Guiao said. "The way we won this game is the way we will win the series. We will do it ourselves because the referees are not giving us a break."

The Barako actually held the Beermen scoreless after that Tenorio basket, with Carlo Sharma and Cyrus Baguio scoring a bucket each to shove Red Bull within striking distance, 106-107, heading into the final 41.9.

The golden chance then came after Tenorio bungled another triple try, and Pennisi got the perfect pass from Junthy Valenzuela in a two-man game up high. Dondon Hontiveros' potential game-equalizing layup was foiled by Valenzuela.

Larry Fonacier led Red Bull with 23 points, 14 of them coming in the second period when the Barako stuck at the coattails of the Beermen, who were paced by Danny Seigle's 22 points.

Rudy Hatfield scattered 18 points and plucked down a night-high 20 rebounds and Jay-Jay Helterband finished with 14 markers and 13 feeds in tremendous backup efforts to Caguioa.

"I saw the never-say-die spirit in this team tonight," Ginebra coach Jong Uichico said. "We just beat them (Phone Pals) with guts and heart. We came out and fought hard out there."

The Kings wriggled out of a tight game with a run that bridged the third and fourth quarters and Caguioa on the firing end.

The scores:

First Game

GINEBRA 110—Caguioa 35, Hatfield 18, Helterbrand 14, Reavis 13, Tubid 12, Salvacion 7, Holper 5, Mamaril 5, Macapagal 1, Seigle 0, Abarrientos 0.

TALK 'N TEXT 103—Washington 23, Carey 21, Taulava 17, Alapag 17, Cardona 15, Ritualo 4, De Ocampo 4, Fran 2, Noble 0, Belano 0.

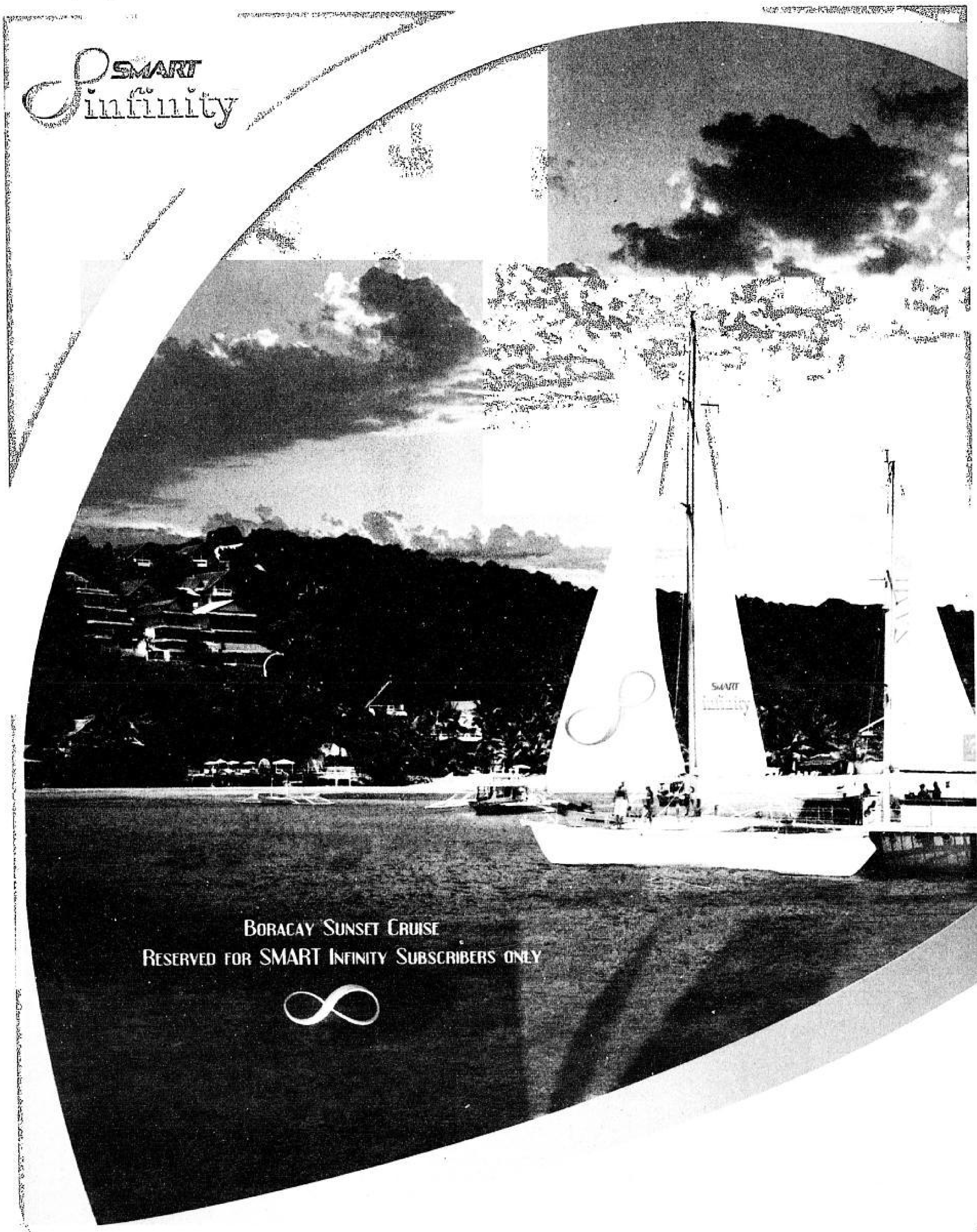
Quarters: 29-29, 48-52, 77-75, 110-103.

Second Game

RED BULL 109—Fonacier 23, Sharma 16, Valenzuela 16, Najorda 14, Alvarez 11, Pennisi 11, Baguio 8, Cruz 7, Villanueva 3, Robinson 0.

SAN MIGUEL 107—Seigle 22, Hontiveros 17, Pena 15, Racela 10, Ildefonso 10, Tenorio 9, Calaguio 9, Wilson 6, Adducul 4, Gonzales 3, Tugade 2.

Quarters: 23-16, 46-52, 76-77, 109-107.



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Leviste lawyers snub hearing in new probe

Velasco cites 'loopholes' in cops' investigation

By Leila B. Salaverria and Tarra Quismundo

CALLING THE PROCEEDINGS ILLEgal and a farce, the lawyers of former Batangas Gov. Jose Antonio Leviste yesterday refused to participate in the hearing called by the Department of Justice to reinvestigate the case filed against their client.

Leviste himself did not appear at the hearing held at the DOJ which was presided over by Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco.

The hearing began at 2 p.m. after Velasco was informed that Judge Elmo Alameda of the Makati City Regional Trial Court Branch 150 had junked earlier in the day a petition from Leviste's lawyers asking him to reconsider his Jan. 24 ruling.

Alameda earlier approved a petition from Rafael de las Alas' family for a reinvestigation of the homicide charges filed against Leviste who had confessed to killing his longtime aide in self-defense.

In his decision yesterday, the judge upheld his earlier ruling and said, "Having established their (De las Alas' family) right to ask the court to order the City Prosecutor to reevaluate and reexamine the evidence and, if necessary, to conduct a reinvestigation of the case, the reinvestigation should not be derailed and stymied by a precipitate ad capricious denial by this court."

Velasco, meanwhile, noted during the hearing that there were "loopholes" in the police investigation of the crime scene.

De las Alas' body was found in Leviste's office on the 9th floor of the LPL Towers in Legaspi Village, Makati on Jan. 12. An autopsy report showed that he had been shot five times, including once in the nape.

For this reason, his family sought the reinvestigation of the case against Leviste, saying the former government should have been charged with murder, not homicide.

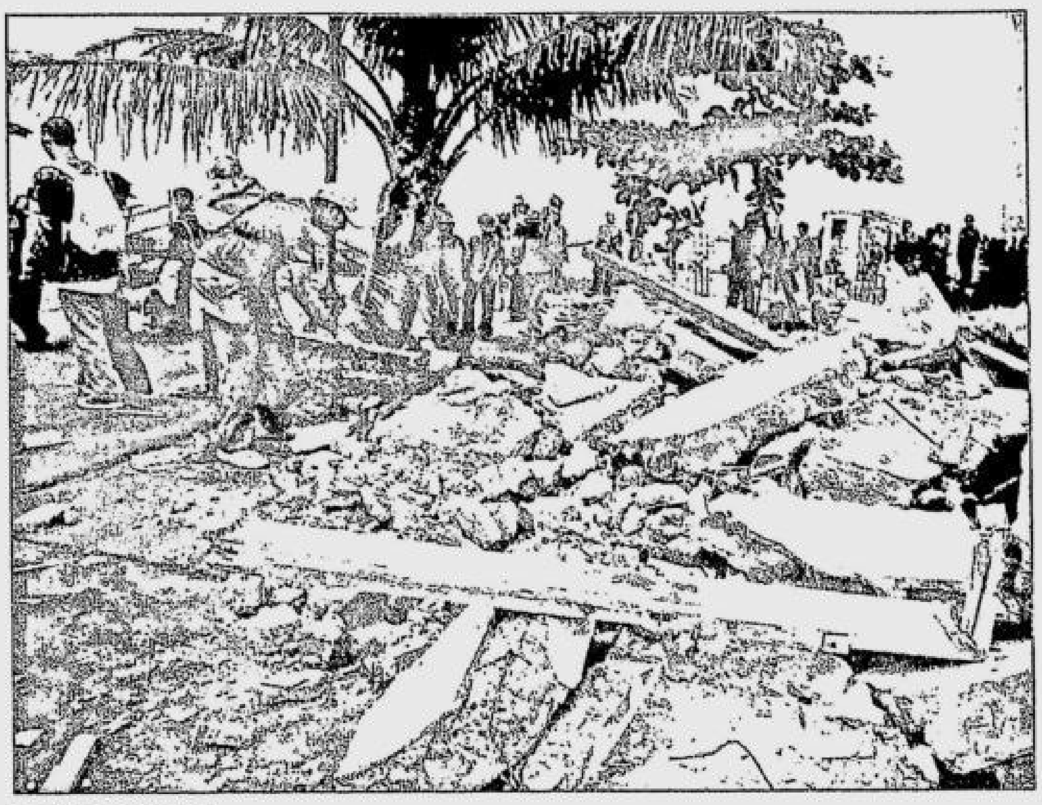
According to Velasco, the police failed to follow standard operating procedures (SOP) and retrieve other evidence that would have helped in the investigation of the case.

The state prosecutor yesterday questioned the policemen and members of the Scene of the Crime Operations (Soco) team who went to the LPL Towers.

Velasco said the police failed to get the document on Leviste's table—as seen in crime scene pictures—that could have been the cause of the argument between Leviste and De las Alas.

The police also did not lift fingerprints from the crime scene and conduct alcohol, drug and paraffin tests on Leviste, which, according to Velasco, was SOP.

Manuel Singson, Leviste's lawyer, said they might question before the Court of Appeals the Makati court's denial of their motion. They also predicted that since Velasco's "boss"—Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez—had already prejudged the case, the reinvestigation would result in the upgrading of the homicide charge filed against their client to murder.



DEMOLITION TIME A crew from the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority demolishes shanties and illegal structures at the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex in Pasay City. Yesterday's operations were part of the MMDA's campaign to clear public places of illegal settlers. ROGER MARGALLO

WINNING IN THE 2007 ELECTIONS (Feb. 27, 2007) Topics: Effective Campaign Team & Platforms; Making Your Campaign Strategies Work; ICT & Data Mining; Applying Sun Tzu's Art of War in Your Campaign; How to Counter Cheating. Venue: Richville Hotel, 286 EDSA, Mandaluyong City, 8am-5pm. Get a 10% early bird or group discount. To register, call Leading Edge Forum for Excellence, Inc. at 578-9833; 531-0084 or CP: 0919-229-9777; 0919-229-9780; 0915-780-4379 or email at: tritium@pldtdsl.net or leffeinc@yahoo.com. Buffet lunch w/ snacks & flowing coffee. Limited seats only. Register Now!

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GREENHILLS PROPERTY AT STAKE

Hotel exec nabbed for selling lot with fake land title

By Emman Cena

A HOTEL EXECUTIVE WHO MOONLIGHTS as a real estate agent was arrested on Wednesday with his business partner after another real estate agent and his client accused them of selling a lot allegedly covered by a fake land title.

Reynaldo Concepcion Jr. and Teresita Lim, 63, were arrested in an entrapment operation by the San Juan police in a fastfood restaurant in Ortigas while receiving P19 million from the complainants—Macario Ching and Lilian Yao. Police said Concepcion is a vice president of Days Hotel Philippines, a hotel chain. This was confirmed by Days Hotel human resource head, Leah Calma, who told the INQUIRER that Concepcion was the vice president for sales and marketing. Concepcion, Calma added, was the brother of Days Hotel president, James. However, she refused to comment on his case, saying it was "too personal."

In his sworn statement, Ching, a real estate agent and his client, Yao, told the police that Concepcion and Lim sold them a 720-sq m lot on Polk Street, Greenhills for P23 million last year. Ching said Lim had introduced herself as Feliciana T. Lim, the owner of the property. After signing the deed of sale on Dec. 30, Ching said his client gave the two suspects a downpayment of P2.3 million. The two also demanded an association fee of P1.8 million, he added.

A check with the Registration Authority showed that the land title was fake, Ching added. Concepcion, meanwhile, said he did not know the title was fake.

Peewee, Panaligan meet again today

By Jocelyn R. Uy

DETERMINED TO RECLAIM WHAT he believes is rightfully his, dismissed Pasay Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad yesterday said he would go to City Hall today, along with nine other city officials and his supporters.

"I will talk to Allan Panaligan and resolve this matter," Trinidad told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Panaligan replaced Trinidad as acting mayor when the latter was suspended for six months by the Ombudsman last September for approving garbage contracts that were allegedly overpriced.

After the Ombudsman ordered Trinidad's dismissal from the service for graft last month, Panaligan was sworn in as mayor in a permanent capacity.

However, in a letter to Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Trinidad requested for his reinstatement as city mayor starting today.

He argued that his suspension ends today because the Ombudsman had reduced his suspension from six to five months. Trinidad added that the dismissal order should not be implemented while his motion for reconsideration is pending before the court. Puno has yet to respond to Trinidad's letter.

Panaligan, meanwhile, said he was worried that Trinidad's presence at City Hall today would again disrupt business transactions and inconvenience taxpayers.

"They (Trinidad supporters) are reportedly mobilizing people through text messages. But they should not come here. It's the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) who is in a position to decide on the matter," he said over the phone.

When asked whether or not he would face Trinidad and discuss matters with him, Panaligan said: "We can't talk about reinstatement. There's no need to do that. I was installed legally by the DILG based on the order of the Ombudsman."

Suspected drug courier nabbed

By Margaux C. Ortiz

AN OFFICIAL OF THE NATIONAL BUreau of Investigation (NBI) yesterday revealed the alarming proliferation of a notorious party drug in Metro Manila following the arrest of a courier during a buy-bust operation in Quezon City last Saturday.

Oscar del Pilar, 36, was nabbed in his house in Horseshoe Village, Quezon City while accepting marked money from an undercover agent in exchange for 10 tablets of Ecstasy.

"The suspect, who introduced himself as Sherwin to customers, has been selling Ecstasy tablets all over Metro Manila," said NBI Anti-Organized Crime Division chief Oscar Embido. Ecstasy, a synthetic drug, is classified as a stimulant.

The suspect and another accomplice sold the tablet at P600 each to students in exclusive schools.

Pasig studes get scare of their lives

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS WERE sent home yesterday from public schools in Pasig City following reports of a bomb threat.

Parents simultaneously rushed to the gates of at least five public schools in the city, asking that their children be allowed to go home.

The rumors allegedly started at the San Miguel Elementary School but authorities said they did not receive any phone call about a bomb threat.

The report, however, was enough to cause the suspension of classes in San Miguel, as well as in Palatiw Elementary School, Pasig Central Elementary School, Pinagbuhatan Elementary School and Rizal High School, officials said. Bomb experts also searched the public schools but found nothing.

However, a man believed to be mentally ill took advantage of the commotion at San Miguel. He went inside the school, went up the third floor and then jumped in full view of the students.

The man, between 40-45 years old, died while being treated at the Pasig City General Hospital, said PO2 Higino Dancel.

Top brass coddling smugglers

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

AFTER I HAD A VISION IN INDIA, where a spiritual guru told me my vision and wishes would become a reality if I turned into a vegetarian and teetotaler, I can't promise not to touch alcohol for the rest of my life. But I can stay away from alcohol as long as that vision is not realized.

I'm following the advice of a friend who told me, in reaction to that column item, "Don't say you hope it doesn't take place; hope it takes place for the good of the country." Anyway, who am I to prevent somebody's destiny?

***

A high official reportedly gets P100 million a week from smugglers at the piers. That's P400 million a month!

No, sir, he's much too clever to personally collect "*tong*" from smugglers (unlike a politician who allegedly personally received protection money from "*jueteng*" lords).

This official has layers of people receiving the protection money before it reaches him.

The first layer is a police officer known in the piers for his corpulence.

This officer allegedly has lower-ranking cops directly collecting from the smugglers.

He turns over the collections to a woman who sees to it that every single centavo is accounted for.

The woman then reportedly hands the money over to two colonels of the Philippine National Police (PNP). The last layer is a guy who gives the money to the high official.

Neat, isn't it?

***

From whom did I get the above information? From a smuggler who feeds me information from time to time.

The smuggler said he and fellow smugglers were called to a meeting by an underling at the Bureau of Customs.

The customs underling said the piers would be an "open city" for smugglers. There would be "*walang bukasan*" (no opening) of cargoes as long as they paid minimum taxes and duties for their declared goods. Of course, this is over and above the traditional "grease" money.

In other words, if an importer brought in highly dutiable or banned goods which he declared as cheap goods, he would only be paying minimal taxes and duties.

"You have to understand the (grease) money will be used in the election," my smuggler-friend quoted the customs underling as saying.

The "*walang-bukasan*" set-up at the piers has led to an increase in the entry of prohibited drugs, according to my smuggler-friend.

The last paragraph of this item, our police agencies should be worried about but they're not.

***

A Metro Manila congressman has a penchant for hiring three high-class prostitutes and having orgies with them.

This congressman, according to a woman he once hired, would give each of the call girls Ecstasy pills, a drug that heightens libido, before doing the sex act with them.

Ecstasy is banned as it is not only addictive but can cause a mental defect in the user. An overdose of this drug causes death. One well-known personality died reportedly because of an Ecstasy overdose.

So it's not surprising why some people in Congress act the way they do.

Some of them might be taking Ecstasy.

METROBRIEFS

Naia to collect security fee

DEPARTING passengers will have to pay the P200 security fee at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) starting today. Exempted from the new charge are overseas Filipino workers, children below two years old and the flying crew of airlines, the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) said in a statement yesterday. The P200 security fee, also known as the Security Development Charge, will be collected together with the passenger terminal fee of P500. The security fee will be collected for five years , with the Miaa expected to collect a total of P3.5 billion. The money will be used to purchase modern security equipment and shoulder "expenses for other safety and security-related equipment and services."

Nikko Dizon

Triple whammy

ACTOR and former Councilor Darius Razon and his friend, Bautista Pacita, ended up losing valuables to thieves who broke into their vehicles which were parked in the AIC Gold Tower Parking yesterday. Chief Insp. Dyan Agustin, San Antonio Police Precinct chief, told the INQUIRER that Razon and his friend discovered that thieves had broken the windows of their vehicles which were parked beside each other. Razon lost a bag full of jewelry and other valuables worth P30,000 while Pacita lost his laptop computer and other equipment worth P84,000, Agustin added. This is the third time Razon has been in the news. He first landed in the headlines after he lost his daughter in a fire. Last year, his son died in a car accident.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

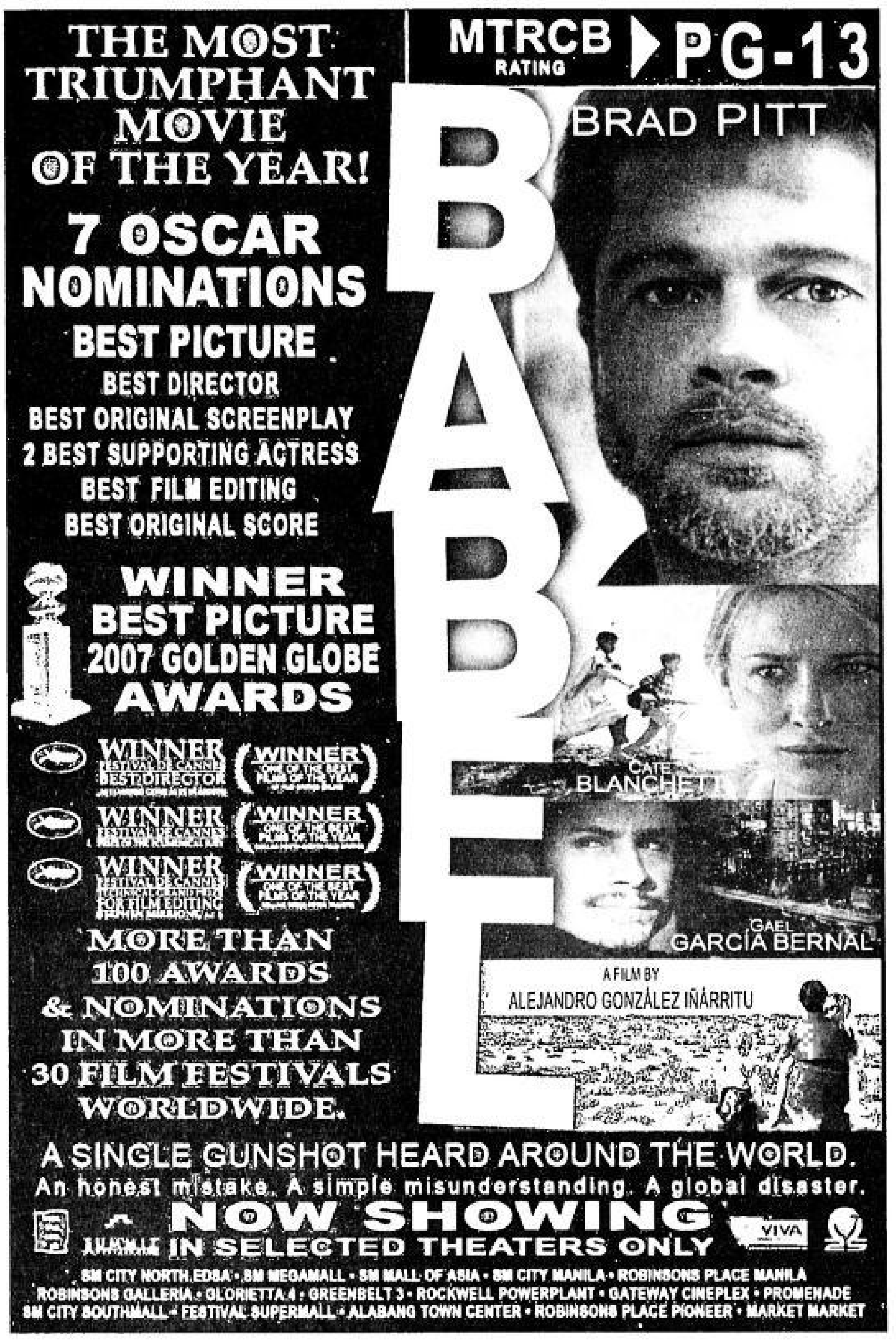
Lecture on cancer

AN AUTHORITY on breast cancer will share his encounters with patients who were able to overcome the ailment today, Feb. 1, at the Brahma Kumaris Meditation Center at 7484 Bagtikan corner Sacred Heart Streets in San Antonio Village, Makati City. Dr. Ashok Metha, a surgeon of the Mumbai General Hospital in India, will share his different methods of healing and how a new perspective of one's self can open doors to actual healing. His lecture, which is open to the public, will be from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. For details, call 8907960 or 8907906.

DID YOU KNOW

TODAY, Feb. 1, is the 344th birth anniversary of Mother Ignacia del Espiritu Santo, founder of the congregation of the Religious of the Virgin Mary, the first all-Filipino congregation for women. Established in 1684 as the Beaterio de la Compania de Jesus, RVM exists to this day. Its Mother house can be found in Quezon City.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research



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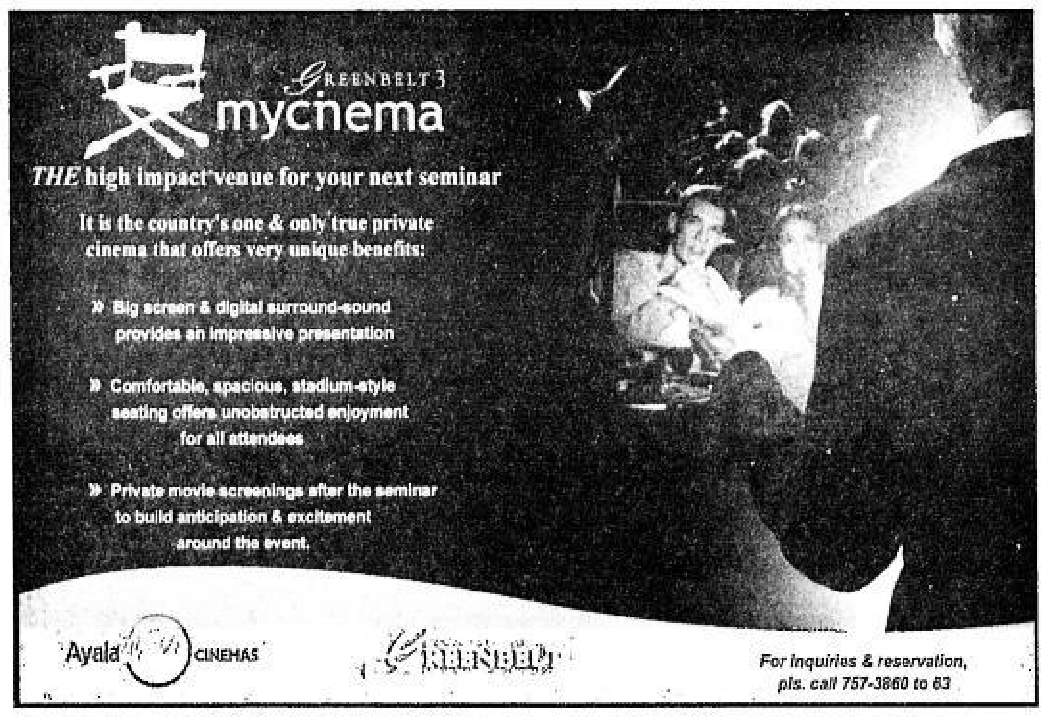

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LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY MARKS 104TH ANNIVERSARY

104 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE FILIPINO

MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

Message

Congratulations to the **Land Registration Authority** on the *104th Anniversary* of your foundation.

As a relatively small nation, our lands are a limited resource. And so this resource must be guarded militantly for the landowners' benefit and against those who would unlawfully seek their usurpation.

The Torrens system, adapted over a hundred years ago, protects the interests of the landowners. And the agency tasked to protect this system, in its current incarnation, is the Land Registration Authority, an attached agency of the Department of Justice.

Throughout the years, the LRA has served our nation by safe-keeping the Torrens titles representing the primary rights of the landowners, whether it be a farmer, homeowner or a corporate entity, in its vaults. Indeed, the agency works tirelessly to preserve these appurtenant rights over land.

Behind this agency are over two thousand men and women who comprise its workforce. This anniversary celebration, therefore, is a tribute to richly deserved by every LRA officer and employee for his perspicacity and dedication to public service.

May you remain a premier office of the bureaucracy, true to your mandate of being the just protector of the interest of the landowners. Keep up the good work!

Mabuhay!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

MANILA
1 February 2007

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the Vice President

Message

My warmest greetings and congratulations to the **LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY (LRA)** as it commemorates its 104th Foundation Anniversary on February 1, 2007.

Having been in existence for more than a century, it would take more than a simple message to put to light the efforts of the agency to protect the rights of the landowner.

As an agency attached to the Department of Justice mandated to issue decrees of registration and certificates of title and register documents, patents and other land transaction for the benefit of landowners, Agrarian Reform-beneficiaries and the registering public in general, LRA has continued to serve the interests of the public, protecting and promoting the Torrens system of titling and registration with a sharpness that borders on faith, in keeping with the needs of the landowner. LRA seeks to armor the Torrens system against the unscrupulous individuals and syndicates who would do our land wrong. It has even made efforts through its legal agreements with law enforcement agencies to provide a secure, stable and trustworthy record of land ownership and recorded interests therein, to the end that we will have social and economic well-being and national development.

I enjoin LRA to renew your commitment to serve the country and the Filipino people with utmost dedication. As it has been the landowner's knight in armor, may the LRA remain one of the shining offices of the government for hundreds of years more!

MABUHAY KAYONG LAHAT!

NOLI "KABAYAN" DE CASTRO

Manila, 30 January 2007

Republika ng Pilipinas
KAGAWARAN NG KATARUNGAN
Department of Justice
Manila

Message

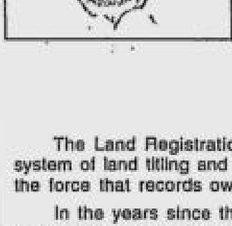
Public service is a public trust, and this is the beacon whose light we all seek and follow, with the determination to serve, and the integrity to serve well.

The Land Registration Authority is the agency mandated to exemplify that noble dictum. Protecting the Torrens system of land titling and registration is the crucial responsibility of the LRA, acting as the repository of the landholder's title, the supreme evidence of ownership over his real property. Aware of its high degree of accountability, it is heartening to note that the LRA has functioned, and continues to function, on the side of the landowner.

Now on its 104th year of service, LRA remains a feather in the cap of the Department of Justice, and a partner of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in her administration's thrust for good governance.

Congratulations and Mabuhay tayong lahat!

RAUL M. GONZALEZ
Secretary



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East Avenue cor. NIA Road, Quezon City

Message

The Land Registration Authority was established in 1903 to effect the Torrens system of land titling and registration in the country. It is this system which stands as the force that records ownership over the lands so covered by it.

In the years since the establishment of the Authority, it has, like a living thing, evolved, improving, through the wealth of the experience of its stewards, the processes which keeps the Torrens system a truly salient scheme inthe protection of the primordial rights of the landowner.

Now in its 104th year of being, the LRA continues to serve the interests that our laws hold dear in the preservation of land. In the past decade alone, the agency has made innumerable leaps in the fine-tuning of practice and procedure by entering into memoranda of agreements with other government agencies to fight land fraud, computerized numerous systems for expeditious transactions, and refurbished internal processes to streamline its operations. It has stood as the sole vanguard against crooked individuals and malevolent syndicates who would seize through their malevolent ploys that which has been held sacred by our people, from time immemorial, when our ancestors tilled the soil for subsistence, to the present, for the cultivator, urban homeowner, proprietor and corporate holder.

As the current administrator of this revered office, I am doubly honored, because the LRA has once again come up with a banner year, assisting in the just disposition of lands to deserving farmer-beneficiaries, aiding in the filing of cases against land fraud, and earning no less than P2.4 billion for the national treasury. I would, therefore, also like to congratulate the good men and women who populate this agency, for their diligence in their work, their acuity to the needs of the public, and their uprightness against the many temptations that attack the public service.

May we all continue to serve the country with the same intense fervor in the years ahead.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

BENEDICTO B. ULEP
Administrator

LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY

2006 Highlights Of Accomplishments

The agency was once again at the top of its game in 2006, proving to be the highest revenue-earning agency among the agencies attached to the Department of Justice. In the past year, it earned a whopping P2.5 Billion in revenue. Sourced from registration fees, legal research, verification fees and filing fees collected through the Registries of Deeds and other various fees collected by the Central Office. Task Force Titulong Malinis continued to do the LRA proud by hauling in quite a number of cases involving various acts of land fraud. In 2006, forty-three (43) cases were completed by the TFTM. Three (3) were forwarded to the OSG for the filing of cancellation of titles investigated upon as fake/or fraudulently while thirty-three (33) were forwarded to the NBI for investigation of land titling anomalies upon complaints filed by aggrieved/concerned parties.

During the FY 2006 issued 580,471 titles which are 99% more than its target of 589,492 titles. It registered 2,437,464 deeds. This represents 99% accomplishment out of its projection of 2,474,856 deeds. It also issued 892 decrees. For the same period this agency resolved 202 consultas, achieving a 101% accomplishment of its target of 200 consultas. With regards to subdivision plans, this Authority has approved 5,441 plans, which is 441 plans over and above its target of 5,000. Titles reconstituted were 2,636. This is 102% of its target of 2,600 titles

Respecting the improvement of systems in the security of land records and provide better working condition for LRA personnel, the Authority has embarked in the construction of its own offices. Sixteen (16) registry construction projects are underway. The twin Registry of Deeds of Laoag City/Ilocos Norte, Boac, Marinduque; Daet, Camarines Norte and Balanga, Bataan were inaugurated on 2006. There are, additionally, eight (8) registries of deeds buildings, which are in various stages of accomplishment, specifically those of Tangub City; Mambajao, Camiguin; San Fernando, La Union; Davao City; Borongan, Eastern Samar; General Santos City; and the twin registry of Iloilo City and Iloilo Province. For 2007, eighteen (18) registry buildings are proposed for construction, namely, Malaybalay, Bukidnon; Calbayog City; the twin RDs of Dipolog City and Zamboanga del Norte; Digos, Davao del Sur; Mati, Davao Oriental; Legaspi City; Bontoc, Mt. Province; Quirino Province; Sorsogon; the twin RDs of Cebu City and Cebu Province; Ilagan, Isabela; Quezon Province; Virac, Catanduanes; Roxas Province; Alaminos, Pangasinan; Guimaras and Tubod, Lanao del Sur. The funding requirements for these infrastructure projects are sourced from LRA Special Account authorized by PD 1529. It is also note worthy that the Agency has constructed twenty-seven (27) registry buildings since 1995. Various equipments, such as computer sets with printer, copying machines, air conditioning units, fire extinguishers and the like, were also purchased to ensure safe, enhanced and upgraded working environment for the employees to improve efficiency and productivity.

The Land Titling Computerization Project, which was the most ambitious project of the Authority, and which stood to eradicate fake titles and fraudulent issuances, was suspended due to cost cutting. However, a petition for the resumption of the said project was set for arbitration, giving hope for the feather in the cap of the LRA.

The Authority, in continued observance with its mandate of public service for the benefit of the landowner, and corollary to the needs of the national economy has, in 2006, through the LRA-CARP, disseminated and registered 32,517 emancipation patents (EPs) and Certificates of Land Ownership Awards (CLOAs) covering some 81,570 hectares of land, as set forth in the LRA-CARP's partial accomplishment report.

To address the problem of graft and corruption, the Integrity Development Action Plan (IDAP) has started for institutionalization. An Internal Audit Unit has been established. Programs on ethics training, spiritual formation and moral recovery have been conducted. With these, graft and corruption will be curbed in the Agency.

The Land Registration Authority has put up an office for a One-Stop-Shop (OSS) within its premises. This OSS provides the following services:

- Easy access to accurate land information
- Issuance of Certified True Copy of Title
- Issuance of Transfer Certificate of Title based on deed of sale of residential lots
- Registration/Annotation of Mortgage
- Issuance of Condominium Certificate of Title (CCT) based on deed of sale of condominium
- Issuance of Transfer Certificate of Title (TCT) based on approved subdivision plans
- Acceptance of Application/Petition for Administrative Reconstitution and Release of Administratively Reconstituted Titles
- Acceptance for Preliminary Verification of Survey Plans of Registered Lands for approval by the LRA/DENR-NCR

THE LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY

PLANS AND PROGRAMS

TOWARDS A SHINING FUTURE FOR THE LANDOWNER
CY 2007 – 2008

The Land Registration Authority is mandated to preserve the integrity of the Torrens system through proper registration. To carry out this mandate, the agency has devised plans and programs that include the following:

1. **Push through the successful implementation of the Land Titling Computerization Project (LTCP).**

   The agency has started the Land Titling Computerization Project to cleanse the Torrens system and provide the public with an efficient, reliable and expeditious service.

2. **Intensify a more vigorous nationwide campaign against the proliferation of fake or fraudulently issued certificates of title.**

   The LRA has created a dynamic inter-agency task force, the Task Force Titulong Malinis, in accordance and cooperation of the Office of the Solicitor General in the filing of cancellation proceedings of titles investigated upon as fake/spurious or fraudulently issued and different government agencies, to address the perennial problem on the proliferation of spurious titles.

   The following preventive measures are to be undertaken:

   a. Adopt a single/uniform cadastral index map
   b. Conduct an inventory and create a database of fake and fraudulent titles, the contents of which will be disseminated to the public
   c. Concerned government agencies (i.e. LRA, RD, DENR, Assessor's Office and BIR) shall computerize their respective land transaction and allow linkage among them
   d. Make representation with Congress for the passage of new laws providing for stiffer penalties for land fraud (i.e. make willful possession of fake titles punishable)
   e. Strengthen public awareness on fake and spurious titles through an intensified information dissemination campaign using tri-media
   f. Encourage the public to report fake/spurious and fraudulent titles to proper agencies
   g. Create special teams to investigate and prosecute cases involving fake/spurious and fraudulent titles.

3. **Continue to improve the physical facilities of the offices of the Registers of Deeds and Central Office.**

   There is also a program for physical upliftment such as the proposed construction of additional Registry of Deeds buildings and renovation of several others. Construction of a Multi-purpose Hall in the Central Office is being considered.

4. **Continue Operation Handog Titulo.**

   The Land Registration Authority instituted a patent titles distribution project through its field offices, the Registry of Deeds, in coordination with local government units and the LRA-CARP, in response to the government pro-poor program and the fulfillment of the objectives of the agency to accelerate delivery of titles to bolster registration and revenue collections.

5. **Undertake measures in its drive against corruption, to wit:**

   a. Implement standardized and reliable procedures in the office of the Register of Deeds. The LRA will prescribe standard documentary requirements and standard examination procedures that will negate the use of discretion, which is a source of corruption in the discharge of duties.
   b. The LRA will institutionalize the Internal Audit Unit, to monitor the performance of registry personnel particularly in the collection of registration fees and its prompt and accurate reporting thereof in accordance with COA rules and compliance with all registration requirements in the processing of transactions.

6. **Continue to expedite issuance of decrees/titles.**

   The LRA shall further study measures and create new ones as the need arises for the expeditious processing of issuance of decrees of registration and/or land titles. The LRA shall monitor compliance of existing Circular prescribing a time-frame within which the registration of documents shall be completed upon compliance with all registration requirements and submission of pertinent documents.

7. **Full support to the creation of a Management Planning and Organizational Assessment Unit.**

   This unit is in charge of work process improvement program, service quality improvement program, services enhancement program and other consultancy management and participatory service management functions.

8. **Total Quality Management through Improved Systems and Procedures both at the Central Office and Registries of Deeds.**

   The LRA shall formulate internal measures to advance the implementation of Civil Service Rules and Regulations. It shall also supplement specific guidelines in routing and monitoring tasks and assignments. Moreover, the Authority shall improve measure for the identification of work targets and periodic assessment of performance.

9. **Advocacy of Transparency, Excellence in Performance, Observance of the Merit System in Recruitment/Promotion and Re-Assignments to Improve Employee's Morale.**

   To this end, the agency shall formulate procedures for transparency in the budget allocation; require full participation of key officials in the budget preparation.

   The agency shall also push for reforms in the benefits of its employees, such as increase of salaries, monetization of leave credits, etc.

   To ensure that only deserving employees shall be able to reap the rewards of the service, the Merit Promotion Plan and Performance Evaluation System shall be honed through the proper channels of the agency.

10. **More Training Seminars/Workshops/Regular Meetings and provisions of avenues as Clearinghouse for the Resolution of important issues affecting Administration and Operations.**

    The agency shall promote monthly meeting of all department heads and division chiefs, including registrars of deeds, for the formulation of pertinent policies for the betterment of the LRA.

    Moreover, the agency shall advance policies for training its personnel so as to keep them abreast win the latest polices and innovation in the public service.

11 **Optimized Human Resources Utilization/Need for Review of Deployment Procedures vis-à-vis Plantilla Items.**

    In the light of the need to rationalize positions, a review of all positions shall be conducted so that redundancy shall be avoided.

12 **Effective Management of Material Resources.**

    The agency shall promote that effective implementation of the Annual Procurement Program with the policy of prioritizing the actual need for supplies and equipment, including distribution, so that government expenditures may be effectively curbed.

13. **In our continuing efforts to avoid tedious, time consuming and expensive court proceedings, we propose the passage of the following measures:**

    a. An Act amending Sec. 6 of Republic Act No. 26, authorizing the Registrar of Deeds to file petitions for reconstitution of lost or destroyed original copies of certificates of titles at the expense of the government, in case of loss or destruction falling outside the provision of Republic Act No. 6732.
    b. An Act amending Sec. 9 of Republic Act 26, allowing administrative cancellation of the two (2) year period reservation for administratively reconstituted titles.
    c. An Act allowing administrative corrections of clerical or typographical errors commited in writing, copying, transcribing or typing of an entry in theMANILAy plans and certificates of land titles.
    d. An Act allowing administrative cancellations of adverse claim after the lapse of 30 days period.
    e. For serious study and consideration is the proposal to allow administrative issuance of new duplicate certificate in case of loss or theft of the owner's duplicate certificate and change of civil status, with certain safeguards.

MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

TEN-POINT AGENDA TO "BEAT THE ODDS" IN SIX YEARS UNDER THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION

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and agenda for the next six years"
-- President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

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E - Education for all
A - Automated elections
T - Transport and digital infrastructure to connect the country

T - Terminate the MILF and NPA conflicts
H - Heal the wounds of EDSA
E - Electricity and water for all barangays

O - Opportunities for 10 million jobs
D - Decongest Metro Manila
DS - Develop Clark and Subic

LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY
LRA RD DRD NATION
Theme: "LAND TITLING
BLDG., LRA COMPOUND, EAST A
10

US takes new steps to isolate Iran

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES TOOK new steps to isolate Iran Tuesday, announcing a freeze on the sale of all F-14 fighter parts and warning that an attempt by Tehran to block the flow of Gulf oil could be turned against it.

President George W. Bush reiterated in a television interview that the US had no plans to invade Iran, but will step up diplomatic pressure to convince it to abandon its nuclear program.

"And the best way to do so is to continue rallying other nations to join us and expressing ourselves very clear to the Iranians that 'You will be isolated, that you won't be able to achieve your greatness, that you'll hurt your people economically if you continue to insist upon a nuclear weapon,'" he told ABC News.

Countering Iran has emerged as a prime objective of US policy as Washington struggles to stabilize Iraq and regain its footing in a region rife with both anti-American and sectarian tensions.

Admiral William Fallon, Bush's nominee to replace General John Abizaid as commander of US forces in the Middle East, said Iran appeared to be developing military means to deny US forces access to the oil-rich Gulf.

"But I would note this is not a one-sided game, or a one-sided situation, in that Iran is, I believe, critically dependent on its export of petroleum products for its economic vitality," he told the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"And those exports go through the same Straits of Hormuz that they would potentially seek to deny us access to," he said.

About a quarter of the world's oil goes through the straits, which are bordered by Iran on one side and Oman and the United Arab Emirates on the other.

Experts say the closure of the straits would send oil prices soaring.

Fallon's appointment, which the US Senate is expected to confirm, coincides with Bush's ordering a second aircraft carrier strike group to the Gulf.

The arrival of the aircraft carrier USS John Stennis would raise the US naval presence in the region to its highest level since the 2003 invasion of Iraq. *AFP*

US Congress can halt Iraq war, say experts

WASHINGTON—THE US Congress has the power to end the war in Iraq, a former Bush administration attorney and other high-powered legal experts told a Senate hearing on Tuesday.

Facing mounting opposition over his Iraq troop increase plan, President George W. Bush insisted it would be "too extreme" if lawmakers pass a resolution condemning his Iraq policy.

Four out of five experts called before the Senate Judiciary Committee said Congress could go even further and restrict or stop US involvement in Iraq if it chose.

"I think the constitutional scheme does give Congress broad authority to terminate a war," said Bradford Berenson, a Washington lawyer who was a White House associate counsel under Bush from 2001 to 2003.

"It is ultimately Congress that decides the size, scope and duration of the use of military force," said Walter Dellinger, former acting solicitor general, the government's chief advocate before the Supreme Court, in 1996-97.

The hearing was frequently punctuated by outbursts from more than a dozen antiwar protesters, who were asked several times to be quiet but not thrown out.

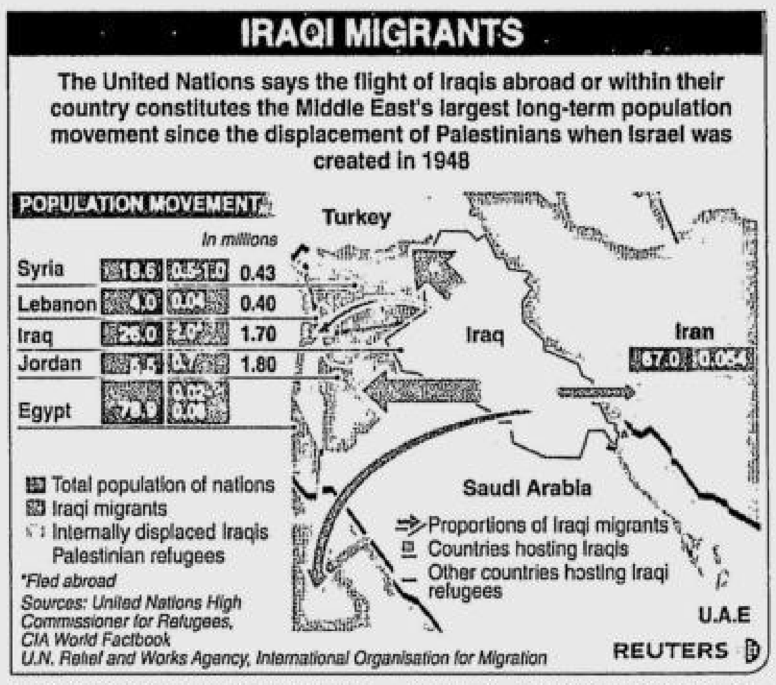
A subcommittee chair who ran the hearing, Sen. Russ Feingold, said he would introduce a bill prohibiting the use of funds for the war six months after enactment.

"Today we've heard convincing testimony and analysis that Congress has the power to stop the war if it wants to," said Feingold, a Wisconsin Democrat.

The Senate is poised to take up a resolution opposing Bush's recent decision to add 21,500 troops in Iraq. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, a Nevada Democrat, said this debate would take place next week.

"I wouldn't say it's unpatriotic. I think it's—I think it is too extreme," Bush said in an ABC News interview when asked whether it would be unpatriotic for Congress to pass a resolution condemning his Iraq policy.

Any such resolution would not be binding on the president, while legislation to cut funds—assuming it passed—would be. However, cutting funds is much more controversial as many lawmakers do not want to do so when troops are abroad. *Reuters*


IRAQI MIGRANTS
The United Nations says the flight of Iraqis abroad or within their country constitutes the Middle East's largest long-term population movement since the displacement of Palestinians when Israel was created in 1948
POPULATION MOVEMENT
In millions
Syria 18.6 0.5-1.0 0.43
Lebanon 4.0 0.04 0.40
Iraq 26.0 1.70
Jordan 1.80
Egypt
Turkey
Iraq
Iran 67.0 0.054
Saudi Arabia
U.A.E
Total population of nations
Iraqi migrants
Internally displaced Iraqis
Palestinian refugees
*Fled abroad
Proportions of Iraqi migrants
Countries hosting Iraqis
Other countries hosting Iraqi refugees
REUTERS

Sources: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, CIA World Factbook, U.N. Relief and Works Agency, International Organisation for Migration

'Blasphemous' publisher to handle Pope's 1st book

VATICAN CITY—IF POPE BENEDICT hopes his first book will sell like Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code," he wound up with the right US publisher.

Doubleday, the company that sold Brown's book about Jesus fathering children—which the Vatican branded as blasphemous—is also handling the American market for Benedict's book about the life of Christ.

The Vatican's publisher distanced itself from the decision-making process in a statement on Tuesday, but Italian media still poked fun at the choice of Doubleday.

Only last year, a Vatican cardinal threatened legal action as the book was turned into a Hollywood blockbuster, starring Tom Hanks. Tarcisio Cardinal Bertone, now Vatican secretary of state, called it a "sack full of lies" and called for a boycott.

Il Giornale newspaper jokingly declared in a front-page story that the Pope, former Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, was now about to put out a "Ratzinger Code" of his own.

The reality may be more the stuff of business acumen than intrigue.

The Vatican sold worldwide distribution rights to Italy's Rizzoli which "independently" awarded Doubleday the US rights, the Vatican's publishing house said.

Doubleday, it noted, had published a book by Pope John Paul and other Catholic works. Benedict's book, "Jesus of Nazareth," is meant to be a personal, historical-theological analysis of Jesus as the central figure of the Christian faith.

The first volume of the book will cover the life of Christ from his baptism in the River Jordan as a young man to the Transfiguration, when the gospel says three of his apostles saw his divine nature and had visions of Moses and Elijah. *Reuters*

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3 months	3.63%	3.75%	3.75%	3.88%
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Ailing Castro looks stronger in new TV images

HAVANA—STATE TELEVISION showed Fidel Castro for the first time in three months on Tuesday and the ailing Cuban leader said he was still in the fight to recover from surgery that forced him to relinquish power last July.

Castro, 80, looked stronger than he had in a previous video, but still frail, in the images from a two-hour meeting on Monday with Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, his closest ally in Latin America.

"This is far from being a lost battle," Castro said. He spoke slowly in an almost unintelligible voice in footage that showed him sipping orange juice and standing.

The new video was shown almost six months to the day since Castro temporarily handed over power to his brother, Defense Minister Raul Castro, last July 31 after emergency surgery for intestinal bleeding.

That was the first time he had relinquished control since his 1959 revolution that steered the Caribbean island on a socialist course and made Cuba an enduring ideological foe of the United States.

Castro was last seen in an Oct. 28 video clip looking very frail and walking with difficulty. He appeared to have put on weight in the latest images.

Cuba has denied Castro has stomach cancer but his precise illness is a state secret. He is thought to be suffering from diverticulitis, a disorder of the large intestine. *Reuters*

A TELEVISION frame grab shows Cuban leader Fidel Castro (left) greeting Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in Havana, Cuba Jan. 30. State television showed Castro for the first time in three months.

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WORLDBRIEFS

Tribunal for war crimes

PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA—Malaysia's former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said Wednesday he is forming a tribunal to try heads of governments for alleged war crimes, including US President George W. Bush. The tribunal, to be formally launched at a peace conference Mahathir is hosting Feb. 7, will not have the legal authority of any international organization and will not be able to impose penalties—but Mahathir said its aim is to condemn the accused in the history books. "The accused may disregard" the tribunal, Mahathir said at a news conference. "There will be (other) people who will take it seriously, and historians will attach an epithet that they will not like. They will go down in history as war criminals." *AP*

Muslim ME initiative

JAKARTA—Muslim countries need to club together in a new initiative to resolve turbulence and violence in the Middle East, the leaders of Indonesia and Pakistan said on Wednesday. "We reviewed the turmoil in Palestine, in Iraq, in Lebanon, in Afghanistan and we both have consonance of views in a requirement of a new initiative," Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf told a joint news conference on the lush grounds of the white-painted colonial-style Indonesian presidential palace. Musharraf, who was due to fly next to Malaysia for a meeting with Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, said such a grouping of "like-minded" Muslim nations would be listened to. *Reuters*

US security aid for Abbas

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush has ordered the transfer of about $86 million in aid to strengthen security forces loyal to Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, the White House said Tuesday. Confirmation of the US aid came a day after an Islamic militant carried out the first suicide bombing inside Israel in nine months and as Abbas' Fatah party is locked in a violent power struggle with the Islamist movement Hamas. The aid is part of a broader US push to revive peace negotiations between Abbas and Israel and comes ahead of a meeting here Friday of the so-called Quartet of Mideast mediators—the US, Russia, European Union and United Nations. US officials said the aid includes training, vehicles and uniforms. *AFP*

WHAT'S INSIDE

▨ **The daughter** also rises /A25

SPORTS

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▨ **Wizards** keep East lead /A26

Cage body braces for 'flagrant foul' vs Unity Congress

By June Navarro

THE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (BAP) is about to deliberately commit a flagrant foul in an apparent bid to derail efforts to unify the country's top stakeholders in the sport, a ranking official of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP) revealed yesterday.

PBA chair Ricky Vargas said a reliable source had told him that the BAP was planning to secure a temporary restraining order that would bar the SBP from holding the Unity Congress Monday at the Dusit Hotel.

"That's the only way to stop the congress," said Vargas, one of the prime movers of the SBP together with PLDT big boss Manny V. Pangilinan and PBA commissioner Noli Eala.

And the effects of a TRO is not lost on the SBP.

"If true, a TRO will move us further apart," Vargas explained. "It will be disruptive because we have to go through another process—the legal process."

The planned TRO comes at the wake of BAP's announcement that it would boycott the congress—a complete turnaround from new president Go Teng Kok's declaration that his administration would be pro-unity.

However, several organizations affiliated with the BAP have already signified their intention to attend the congress.

"They (BAP board) probably couldn't persuade the other BAP members not to attend the congress," said Vargas. "Based on our list, majority of their members are coming."

The congress is expected to be attended by the major stakeholders of the sport who will elect a set of SBP interim officers from the 25-man board of trustees composed of 12 directors each from the BAP and Pilipinas Basketball.

After installing the officers, the BAP and PB will cease to exist based on the joint communique signed by representatives of both groups and endorsed by the international basketball federation (Fiba) in Tokyo last year.

"But for us, it's business as usual," Vargas said.

"The congress will proceed as sched-

CAGE/ A25

PBL semifinal playoffs get going today /A24

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EASTWOOD CITYWALK II - Unit A3-3B & 2F-3B
GATEWAY - Ground Floor
TUTUBAN CENTERMALL - Ground Floor
SM MALL OF ASIA - Level 2
Outlet Store:
PASEO de STA. ROSA - Ground Floor
Provincial:
AYALA CENTER CEBU - Ground Floor
ROBINSON'S CEBU - Ground Floor
ROBINSON'S BACOLOD - Ground Floor
ROBINSON'S BIG-R CAGAYAN DE ORO - Level 1
ISLAND CITY MALL BOHOL - Ground Floor
KCC MALL GENERAL SANTOS CITY - Ground Floor
ROBINSON'S LIPA BATANGAS - Level 2

Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0397 series of 2007

AUSTRALIA'S 2005 RP Open champion Adam Le Vesconte (above) is one of 11 former winners in the fold. EDWIN BACASMAS

91st RP Open under way at Wack Wack

By Musong R. Castillo

SCOTT STRANGE HAS A PIECE of $300,000 Philippine Open history going against him. And it seems to be a formidable one.

The long-hitting Australian from Perth leads a crack field of 156 shotmakers in the 91st edition of Asia's oldest national championship that tees off today at Wack Wack East, seeking to do what no man has done in the last 50 years.

Not since the great Celestino Tugot has anyone repeated as champion here.

And Strange will have to come up with another brilliant play on one of Asia's toughest courses to capture this third leg of the young Asian Tour.

There are 11 former winners in the field, including one of its most charismatic champions, Frankie Miñoza.

Tugot captured four of his victories successively from 1955, also over the heavily wooded East course, which has been prepared to mean championship form with its sleek greens and sun-baked fairways. The winds add to the formidable challenge.

Strange tees off in the 7:35 a.m. group on hole No. 1 with Thailand's Chawalit Plaphol and Taiwan's Chen Tze-chung.

"Tee shots will spell the difference," Miñoza, who will be teeing off from the back nine, told reporters in Filipino yesterday.

The hole sequence will be reversed for the tournament, with the final three holes in the front nine for members now made as the last three, certainly a devilish stretch which could be the graveyard of many a player's dreams.

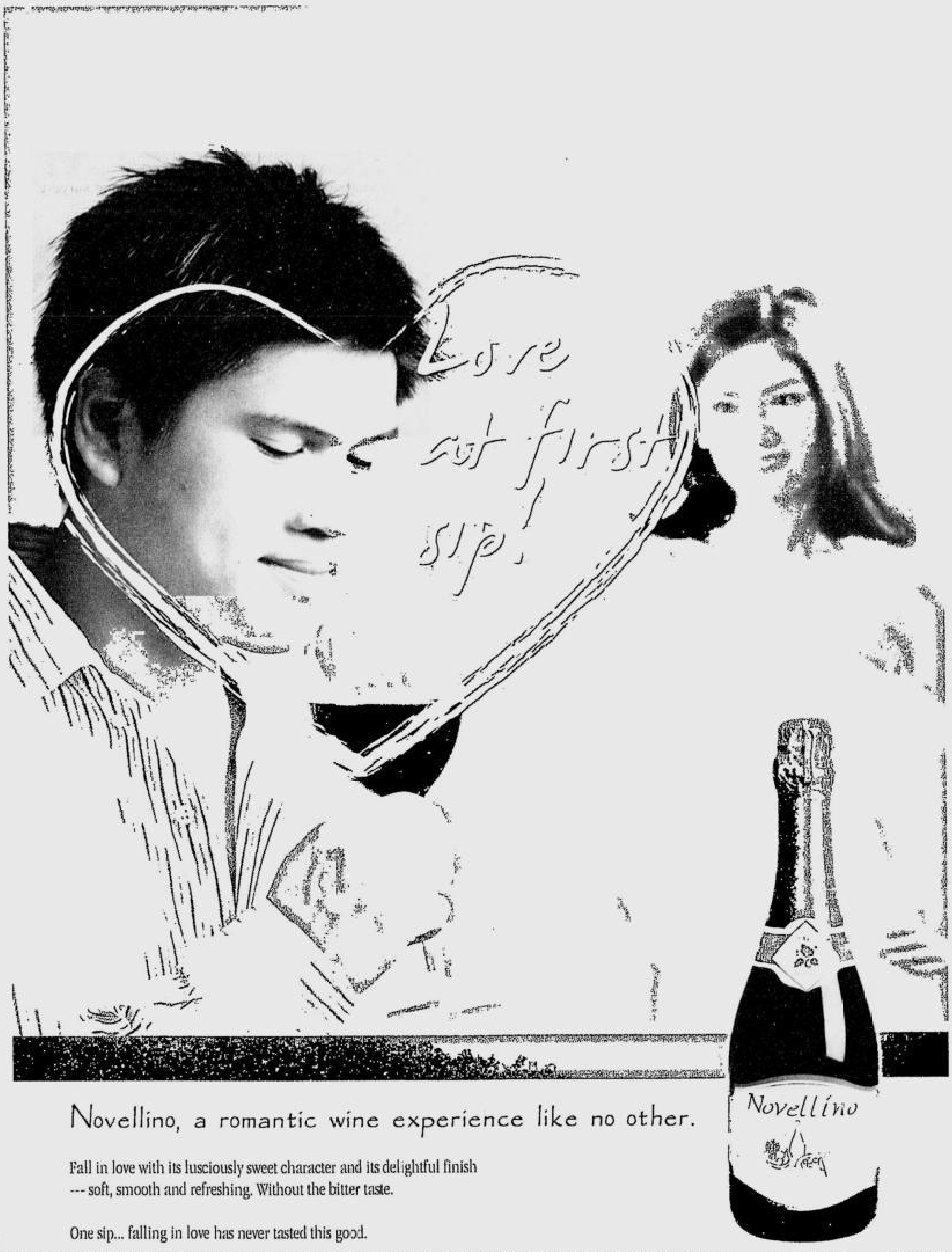
Juvic Pagunsan, the brightest Filipino here in the last four years, is in flight that includes 6-foot-7 Australian Adam Blyth and 2004 champion Edward Michaels. *(See related story and first-round pairings on A24)*

Cassius Casas, the 2001 winner who has been struggling with his game of late, and Robert Pactolerin, the champion in 1990, are in the 6:40 a.m. flight together with Shaaban Hussein.

Gerald Rosales and Rick Gibson, also former champions, are in the 12:25 p.m. flight together with Danny Chia of Singapore.

Miñoza is paired with fellow former Asian No. 1 Thaworn Wiratchant of Thailand and Taiwanese Wang Ter-chang, who won the Open in Puerto Azul in the early 1990s.

American Anthony Kang, who triumphed at Southwoods late in the last decade, is also in the field together with 2005 winner Adam Le Vesconte, one of 17 Australians in the field.



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Novellino

Pagunsan, Miñoza to lead RP Open charge

PAGUNSAN

By Musong R. Castillo

THE SWAGGER WAS THERE, BUT THERE WAS a certain aura of looseness in Juvic Pagunsan on the eve of the 91st staging of the Philippine Open golf championship.

And he feels that this is a good sign, considering all the pressure he's been trying to handle.

On the 11th tee of Wack Wack's fabled East layout, the 28-year-old reigning Asian Tour Rookie of the Year was at his funniest, joking with flightmates in his final practice yesterday.

While he did not keep score, Pagunsan has always done well in the country's national championship, finishing as the low amateur and the top Filipino in each of the last four editions, counting a runner-up finish to American Edward Michaels in 2004.

The ex-caddy from Binitin in Bacolod feels that his game is just where he wants it right now, save for the lack of confidence in his putting stroke which is crucial at Wack Wack.

PAIRINGS: First Round

Tee No. 1
6:30 a.m.—B. Sarmiento (a), Kwanchai Tannin, A. Fernando (a)
6:40—R. Pactolerin, S. Hussein (Mas), C. Casas
6:50—A. Singh R. Sinfuego, T. Kiyota (Jpn)
7:00—R. Moon R. Ismail R. Bain
7:10—M. Dizon S. Griffiths B. Hume
7:20—B. Sallus G. Bondoc (a) O. Sumcad
7:30—C. Rodgers A. Que J. Knutzon
7:40—Lu Wen-teh (Tpe), P. Marksaeng (Tha), A. R. Zahari
7:50—Lin Keng-chi (Tpe), Nam Young-woo T. Carolan
8:00—C. Harris C. Song Lin Wen-hong
8:10—M. Fernando Yeh Chang-ting A. Malik
8:20—J. Laput (a) Lin Chien-bing B. Magada
8:30—A. Balan D. Bisera (a) W. Arjanawal (Tha)
11:15—I. Lascuna, R. Depilo S. Kyaw Naing (Mya)
11:25—J. Moseley R. Abaring G. Mann
11:35—T. Kennedy C. La'O H. Lee
11:45—T. Nakamura (Jpn), T. Ichihara (Jpn), Chen Yuan-chi (Tpe)
11:55—M. Cunning E. Arcillas, N. Basic
12:05 p.m.—U. Park (Kor), Kao Bo-song C. Niral (Tha)
12:15—Suk Jong-yul (Kor), Liang Wen-Chong (Tpe), K. Webber
12:25—G. Rosales, R. Gibson (Can), D. Chia
12:35—M. Dumandan, E. Heinen A. Singh
12:45—S. Taylor D. Singh, M. Detterberg
12:55—S. Srisa-nga (Tha), A. Savolainen R. Garalde
1:05—E. Estrera A. Prathumammanee (Tha), R. Moir
1:15—S. Scahill I. Quiachon E. Baglas

Tee No. 10
6:35 a.m.—M. Bibat (a), E. Salvador, P. Muenlek (Tha)
6:45—R. Jamnong (Tha), Z. MOE (Mya), S. Murthy
6:55—J. Delariarte, S. Dunn Kim Hye-dong (Kor)
7:05—H. Jamil D. Gleeson Jin Park (Kor)
7:15—G. V. D. Valk (Ned), A. Murakami, A. Groom
7:25—E. Michaels A. Blyth J. Pagunsan
7:35—S. Strange (Aus), C. Plaphol (Tha), Chen Tze-chung (Tpe)
7:45—P. Jun-won (Kor), A. Pitts A. Le Vesconte (Aus)
7:55—M. Brown O. Nordberg S. Higaki (Jpn)
8:05—L. Chie-hsiang (Tpe), P. Gunasegaran, E.Sanchez
8:15—G. Flint J. Gobing (a), R. Pagunsan
8:25—B. St John J. Bayron (a), C. Tse-peng (Tpe)
8:35—J. Ababa (a), G. Bhullar M. Pucay P
11:20—M. Alejandro (a), N. Dawar R. Alit
11:30—L. McKechnie V. Bhandari D. Zarate
11:40—A. Hall H. So L. Won-joon (Kor)
11:50—S. Mao-chang M. Wright B. Iles
12:00—C. Devers (US), I. Steel, S. Hend
12:10—R. Beste L. Wei-chih (Tpe) A. Kang
12:20—W. Ter-Chang T. Wiratchant (Tha),F Miñoza
12:30—M. Both A. Asistio II (a) B. Leong (Mas)
12:40—D. Bransdon M. Rominger R. Lee
12:50—L. Chih-bing C. Smith P. Tipsanit (Tha)
1:00—C. Villaroman U. S. Mundy M. Brown
1:10—L. Dacudao (a), H. Jae-min D. Freeman
1:20—K. Tayao (a), H. Chin-sheng (Tpe), A. Songserm (Tha)

"I just lack the confidence, I think," Pagunsan told the INQUIRER in Filipino. "I played bad in the final two days of the Qatar Masters (last week) to finish in a tie for 67th because of the way I putted.

"But I have made the proper adjustments, hopefully, it will serve me well here."

Pagunsan, together with the legendary Frankie Miñoza, are the brightest hopes for a local triumph in the $300,000 championship, which was last won by a Filipino—Cassius Casas—in 2001.

"What I know is that under-par will still win it, despite how tough Wack Wack East is, as people say," Pagunsan said. "What I do not know is who will win it.

"There are too many great players in the field, Boss Frankie (Miñoza) being one of them."

Pagunsan said no one has an advantage at Wack Wack. "Unless, of course, if you grew up playing here," he smiled.

Vargas learns of plan to stop Unity Congress

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

HE DIDN'T BRING home a single piece of *danggit* or dried mango from Cebu, but PBA chair Ricky Vargas assured us he didn't exactly return to Manila empty handed.

"I've got good news and I've got bad news," he said, the day after an overnight stay at the Cebu Waterfront Hotel, where the PBA board held a planning session.

"What would you like to hear first?" he asked.

* * *

Without thinking twice, I asked for the good news.

Ricky said it turned out to be a very good planning session. He was pleased with the hundred percent attendance. Governors Buddy Encarnado and Rene Pardo, missing during the very first planning session under Ricky's term in Macau, were also there.

The good news, he said, is that the plan to build a coliseum is fast gaining ground, and there are now four projected sites: Taguig, Quezon City, Mandaluyong, and the last, SM Mall of Asia.

"The one located in Mandaluyong is a property of one of the PBA ballclubs, Sta. Lucia Realty. PBA governor Buddy Encarnado has shown me the site and his vision for it," Ricky said.

Ricky has also sat down with Hans Sy, SM Mall of Asia owner, to listen to his proposal.

* * *

To set things in motion, committees were immediately formed, and these were all under a "total development" umbrella headed by Buddy E, "who is the expert in this field."

"We will, of course, have our subcommittees on all the aspects of this big project, which will include just about everything, from financing, design, the hiring of experts, even the legal issue. Everyone in the PBA office and in the teams, in particular the lawyers, will be deeply involved in the project," Ricky said.

"By March, the committees should be ready to present the studies to the board."

No doubt, things are taking shape, and Ricky's vision of a coliseum for the PBA may happen earlier than expected.

"But what's the bad news?" I asked.

* * *

"The bad news is—and I got this from a good source—is that the Basketball Association of the Philippines is planning to file a temporary restraining order to stop us from going through with the scheduled Unity Congress of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas," he said.

"They can do it, although I hope they don't."

"So what's the worst thing that can happen if a TRO is issued by the court?" I asked a veteran colleague.

Ricky has announced that the show would go on, regardless.

According to my colleague, the program could go on as planned, except that the elections would not be legitimized.

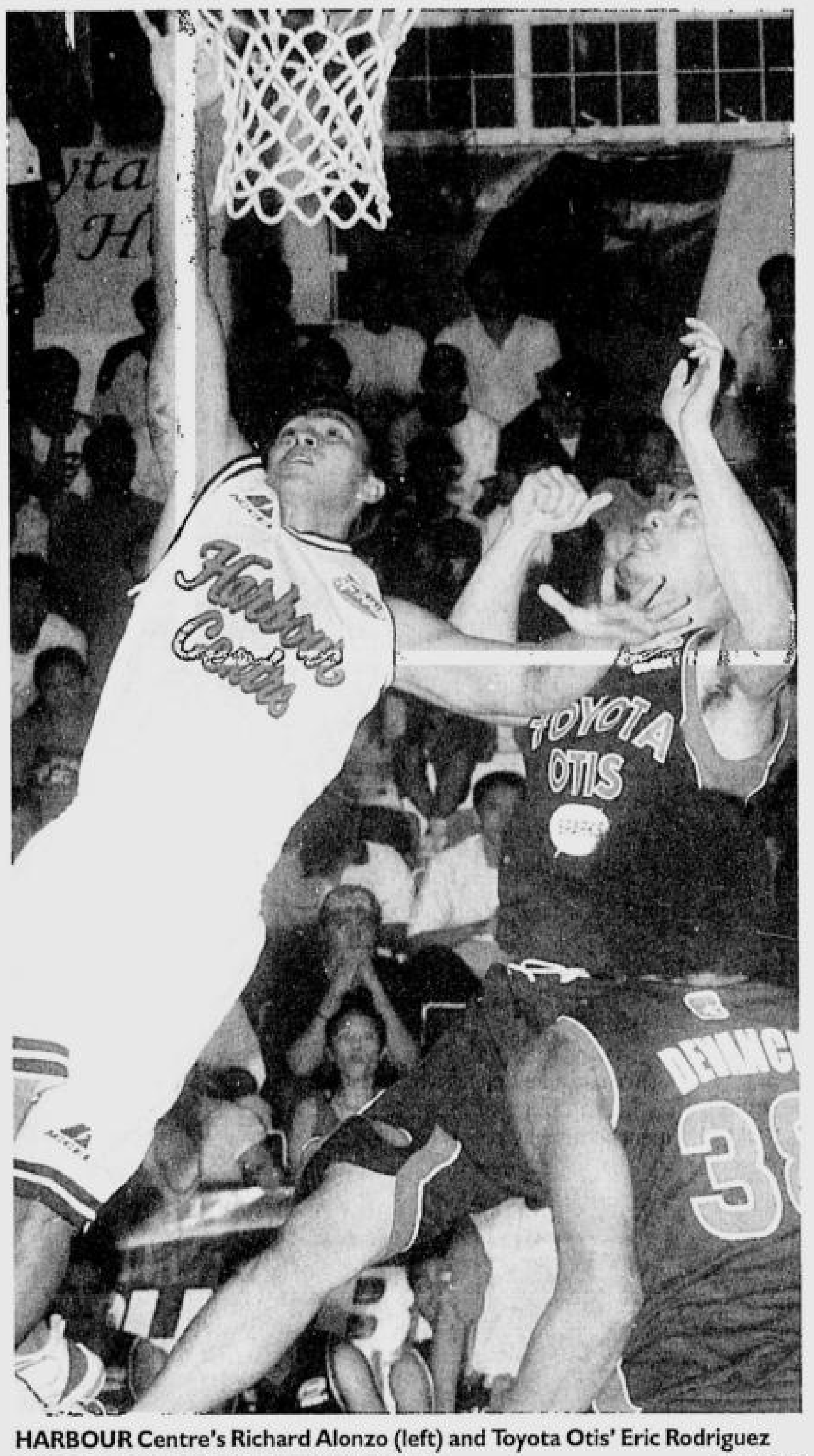
* * *

I don't know if this has anything to do with the planned TRO, but during the planning session in Cebu, the PBA board decided to rescind the memorandum of agreement which they had signed with the BAP some years back.

Under the agreement, the PBA is supposed to send a national team to compete in the FIBA-Asia Championship, the Jones Cup and the FIBA-Asia Interclub, while a BAP-formed squad (then sponsored by Cebuana Lhuillier) will represent the country in the Asian Games, the Southeast Asian Games and in the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) tournament.

Although the SBP has extended an invitation for the BAP to attend the Unity Congress scheduled on Monday at the Dusit Hotel, it is unlikely that any of its members will show up.

PBL s'final playoffs get going today



HARBOUR Centre's Richard Alonzo (left) and Toyota Otis' Eric Rodriguez will again test each other's mettle today.

ERIK ARAZAS

TOYOTA OTIS AND HARBOUR CENTRE, TITLE RIVALS IN THE PREVIOUS conference, lock horns even as Mail and More and Hapee-PCU square off in separate semifinal duels today in the 2007 PBL Silver Cup at the Emilio Aguinaldo College.

GAMES TODAY
(*Emilio Aguinaldo College*)
2 p.m.— Toyota Otis vs Harbour Centre
4 p.m.— Mail and More vs Hapee-PCU

The Sparks and the Port Masters clash at 2 p.m. with Toyota Otis slightly favored following its hard-earned 73-67 win over Harbour Centre recently in their playoff for an outright seat in the Final Four.

The Teeth Masters, well-rested like the Sparks, tangle at 4 p.m. with the Comets coming off a harrowing 53-52 nipping of the Henkel Sista Super Sealers on Tuesday.

All four teams finished tied for first place with identical 7-3 win-records at the end of the classification round. With the semifinal duels a best-of-five affair, league officials expect even more exciting matches.

Toyota Otis coach Louie Alas promised to put premium on defense, particularly under the boards.

"It's going to a be war, especially in the shaded area," said Alas. "We don't play dirty but expect a lot of physical game from us."

But the Port Masters are no pushovers, especially in the talent department, with JC Intal expected to orchestrate their offense.

"That's one quality of JC that rubs onto his teammates," said Harbour Centre Jorge Gallent. "Right now our focus is to stop Toyota. I'm confident that my boys will deliver."

Mail and More coach Lawrence Chongson hopes his team could carry the momentum of its come-from-behind escape against Henkel Sista.

"Credit that to our faith in God," said Chongson after Mail and More became the first rookie team to advance to the Final Four since Granny Goose in 2003.

"We did not waver despite trailing most of the game. We showed that we have character."

Hapee-PCU and Mail and More have even head-to-head records although the Teeth Sparklers won their last game, a 91-80 decision that sent them automatically into the semifinals.

The Sparks swept their two earlier games against the Port Masters, who beat them for the Unity Cup championship last year. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Bata, Django skipping Asian Pool Tour

BILLIARDS LEGENDS EFREN "BATA" REYES AND Francisco "Django" Bustamante will be skipping this year's Asian 9-ball Tour.

And without the longtime buddies, the task of carrying the country's colors in the six-city event that starts April 20 in Jakarta, Indonesia, has fallen on another group of cue masters led by reigning World Pool champion Ronato Alcano.

Reyes, the 52-year-old Hall of Famer, and Bustamante, the former world No. 1, have decided to distance themselves from the region's top event in deference to their deep association with San Miguel Beer, the title sponsor of the Asian tour up to last year.

The organizing ESPN Star Sports has chosen Guinness Beer to handle this year's edition of the event, which serves as one of the qualifiers for the World Pool Championship to be staged in Manila this year.

The move drew a rebuke from local billiards patron Aristeo "Putch" Puyat, who also steers the careers of Reyes, the 2006 Asian tour Order of Merit topnotcher; Bustamante, who wound up fifth in the Order of Merit; and other pool talents by way of Puyat Sports.

"I can say it's (awarding the Asian tour sponsorship to a competitor) unethical," said Puyat. "San Miguel spent time and money to elevate the event. It would not have been painful had they given it to another product.

"I have a reason to feel offended because I was the one who brought ESPN (through then vice president Richard Yang) to Mr. Danding Cojuangco (San Miguel Corp. chair) before the Asian 9-ball Tour was launched."

While the Puyat Sports stable will boycott this year's Asian tour, Alcano and other talents of Bugsy Promotions are certain to join and contend for the total purse of S320,000 (about P16 million).

"We are only after the good of the pool players in the country, so if there's a tournament where we can play, then my players will support it," said Bugsy Promotions head Perry Mariano. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Foiled at World Slasher, Pacman seeks Makati int'l derby crown

BOXING HERO MANNY Pacquiao seeks to improve on his runner-up finish in the recent 2007 World Slasher Cup when he fields his prized birds in the Makati 8-Cock International Derby slated Feb. 5, 7 and 9 at the Makati Coliseum.

Pacquiao is among the favorites in the derby backed by San Miguel Beer and B-Meg Derby Ace with his entry Super Pacman I.

The same family of fighters posted six wins against two losses in the WSC.

To be hosted by promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co, the Makati event dangles a guaranteed prize of P3 million and kicks off Monday with the two-cock elimination round. Entries must be submitted on Sunday, from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Salud, who mentored Pacquiao early in his boxing career, gave the Filipino ring icon several prized gamebirds whose number has grown at the boxing superstar's farm in Gen. Santos City.

WORLD Slasher Cup runner-up Manny Pacquiao (fourth from left) with the group of WSC champion Jenjen Arayata (third from left) at the Big Dome.

"With all the money he has, Manny will not be happy with material gifts from his friends," said Salud. "But one thing that makes him excited are the gamecocks given by respected cockers and breeders."

Last year, Pacquiao refused a P1 million payment to endorse gamecock vitamins. Instead, he accepted gamefowls from a well-known cockfighter which were delivered to his farm.

Pacquiao, who is scheduled to fight South Korea's WBC champion Chi In-jin on April 28 in Macau, is reportedly planning to build a modern cockpit in Gen. Santos.

SPORTSWATCH

Central Luzon, NCR rule Baguio games

CENTRAL LUZON AND NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION EMERGED CHAMPIONS in the recent 4th WNCAA and 1st MNCAA National Championship Games in Baguio City. Central Luzon, represented by Centro Escolar University-Malolos, waylaid Ilocos-University of Luzon, 96-91, and Cordillera Autonomous Region-University of the Cordilleras, 93-88, in the eliminations and repeated the feat in the finals, 78-73, for the title. In the WNCAA games, Lyceum of the Philippines powered NCR-A past Calabarzon-University of Perpetual Help, Laguna and CAR in both basketball and volleyball events. Comprising the WNCAA Mythical Five are CAR forward Shena Marie Flores, Calabarzon center Nathalie Nikki Quilala and guard Mary Kathrene Cruz and NCR-A off guard Dian Rosita Reyes and forward Machico Matsuno, also tournament MVP.

Round 2 of anniversary derby today

THE SECOND ROUND OF ROLIGON MEGA COCKPIT'S 17TH ANNIVERSARY 6-Cock Derby, a blockbuster event that attracted more than 400 entries, takes center stage at 2 p.m. today, with Lakpue Drug Inc. and Thunderbird Enertone as sponsors. Defending champion Ed Patawaran, a backyard breeder from Baliuag, Bulacan, with no more than 100 fighters, kept his hopes alive for back-to-back titles when his entry posted a perfect two wins in Tuesday's opening round. Also with 2-0 slates were Nick Valerio, 2006 Pasay Cocker of the Year Dodie Villarubio, Larry Amante, E. Arcenas, Dong Lacson, Ed Moreno, Jun Arcilla, Mike Tolentino, Danny Pactao, Rudy Gatab, Juan Jordana, Ronnie Andrade, Bing Lazo, Herman Dolatre, Loloy Gaylano and Bob Bonifacio.

Easier format at Las Piñas cockfest up

THE FASTEST-WIN CHAMPION WILL BE DECLARED AFTER EVERY SIX fights in the "Fastest Win One-Cock Timbangan" starting at 12 noon today at the Las Piñas Coliseum. Each champion will receive P20,000 in the 150-entry hackfights hosted by Manny and Junior Rodriguez of Cavite, according to coliseum manager Alex Tobias. Entry fee is P1,650. The LPC 3-cock derby comes next on Saturday with Mayor Nene Aguilar and Tobias as hosts. Champions will receive hefty cash prizes, P1,000 per win bonus and three refrigerators.

The daughter also rises

Elma Muros-Posadas passes baton to 14-year-old Klarrizze

By Marc Anthony Reyes

LIKE MOTHER: Klarrizze (left) warms up at the Brent track oval with famous mom Elma. INQUIRER PHOTO/ EDWIN BACASMAS

ELMA MUROS-POSADAS HAS LEAPT TO VICTORY COUNTLESS TIMES IN HER past that when she scans the names of the opposition, she usually finds it below hers. Nowadays, after having jumped into the sunset of her career, she is looking at the names in the pack again—this time watching out for an heir apparent.

Turns out, she only has to look within the confines of her home.

Only 14, Klarrizze Posadas has inherited her mother's athletic genes—and more.

Standing a modest 5-foot-5, Klarrizze represents Brent International School in Mamplasan, Biñan, Laguna, in basketball and volleyball. She is also being wooed by the softball and swimming varsity squads.

"They wanted to make good use of her quickness," said father and national coach Jojo Posadas of Klarrizze, who is also consistently on the honor roll. "The coaches also took notice of how easily she could get into other sports."

As quick as she is and as easily as she gets into the groove of other sports, Klarrizze wants to prove herself in one particular discipline: track and field.

"I grew up watching my mom and dad train in the stadium, so I guess that pretty much defined what path I would be taking," said Klarrizze.

'She has my genes'

As a 2-year-old, she surprised her parents when she pulled a pillow in front of them, took a few steps backward before launching into a long jump.

"From that time on I know she has my genes," said Elma, who has 15 Southeast Asian Games gold medals to her name, eight of them in long jump, in Filipino.

Though only in Grade 8, Klarrizze is already in the junior varsity for basketball and is her school's top-scoring guard. In back-to-back games last week, she scored 27 and 17 points, respectively.

Mom's beloved sport

But when the track and field season starts, she will be back in the stadium mastering her famous mom's beloved sport.

Jojo said Klarrizze is averaging 13 seconds flat in the century dash, 28.4 in the 200m and 1:02.3 in the 400m, still way off the national junior marks. The milestones she is aiming for—11.76 seconds, 23.54 and 54.75, respectively—belong to another athletics great, Lydia de Vega-Mercado.

Klarrizze, according to her father, is about the same age when Elma started as a Gintong Alay protege and landed two silver and three bronze medals at the Asian championships, and two bronze medals at the Asian Games.

Klarrizze already has a competitor's mind-set. While even the most experienced runners try to stay away from the first lane in the 400m, she doesn't mind starting from there.

"Actually it's better because I can see where my opponents are coming from," said Klarrizze, who now has her own budding trophy cabinet.

It might take a while before Klarrizze gets to look over her shoulder during a race to see the rest of the pack biting dust. But with her parents' guidance, her own determination, and as long as she knows where her rivals are coming from, Klarrizze will know where she's headed for.

Chess game-fixers known today

Lenient punishment offered in exchange for guilty admission

CHESS PLAYERS WHO WILL BE FOUND guilty of game-fixing can still escape with lighter punishment.

The National Chess Federation of the Philippines is ready to show leniency to the suspects provided they make a public apology, a reliable source told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The federation will announce at a press conference today at Mario's Restaurant on Tomas Morato, Quezon City, the names of players a panel of investigators has found guilty of the offense.

"The NCFP will be a bit lenient to the erring players if they admit their fault and make a public apology," said the source, who spoke on the condition that he not be named.

The same source added that some of the eight suspects named by the probe team, which was created by NCFP head Rep. Prospero "Butch" Pichay to look into the mess, cannot escape a guilty verdict because other parties have already admitted their involvement in the scam.

A six-month suspension awaits any player found guilty of rigging chess matches.

Philippine Sports Commission chair William "Butch" Ramirez had said the agency would withhold the monthly stipend of any national chess pool member found guilty of game-fixing.

International arbiter Willie Abalos, a member of the six-man investigative team, has already submitted his report to Pichay.

The source provided the INQUIRER with the score sheets of dubious games.

The probe team earlier identified the suspects as International Master Ronald Dableo, National Master Oliver Barbosa, Woman Fide Master Sheerie Joy Lomibao, WNM Enerose Magno, WNM Christy Lamiel Bernales and untitled players Dino Ballecer, Rainier Labay and Merben Roque.

The players had earlier denied involvement in the scam, also known in chess circles as "networking."

According to lawyer Samuel Estimo, the NCFP executive director, the scam involves chess players deliberately dropping games —even when in a favorable position to win—in exchange for cash.

The source said that at least one big name is expected to be found guilty because the player who connived with him to rig one particular match had admitted his wrongdoing.

"It's hard for that player to deny his involvement because his cohort had already admitted to the fault," said the INQUIRER source. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Cage body braces for flagrant 'foul' . . .

From page A23

uled. We have to go through the (terms of the) communique."

In the event the BAP throws a monkey wrench into the holding of the congress, Vargas said the SBP is duty-bound to honor the court order.

"We will respect the courts," he said. "But it will definitely kill the congress and the last important step [required by] the Fiba [in the] communique will not happen.

"I appeal to them not to do it. I hope they will be enlightened. This thing is getting out of hand."

A reliable source told the INQUIRER that the TRO would be filed either Friday afternoon or Monday morning, just before the convention. The TRO could also be filed anywhere by any member of the BAP.

The BAP had sent a letter to the SBP through a legal counsel Tuesday afternoon, questioning the validity of the congress and the personality of the SBP's lawyer, Marievic Añonuevo.

Go announced the other day that BAP officials would snub the congress due to the impending election of Pangilinan as SBP president.

Go had earlier said that he had taken over as BAP president only to unite the sport.

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY
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Facsimile No.: (02) 815-2662
Website: www.pea.gov.ph • Email: info@pea.gov.ph

Final Notice

Subject: Last Day for Filing Application to Regularize Unauthorized/ Illegal Reclamation is 28 February 2007

The Philippine Reclamation Authority or PRA (formerly Public Estates Authority), is hereby issuing this advisory that there will no longer be further extension of the abovementioned deadline which is actually the second extension of the original deadline set under the PRA Administrative Order (A.O.) No. 2005-1.

Applications, letters of intent or similar documents received at the PRA office on or before 28 February 2007 or post-marked 28 February 2007 shall be considered for proccessing under the aforecited A.O. PRA's address is 7th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

Thereafter, unauthorized/illegal reclamations shall be forfeited in favor of the National Government pursuant to Presidential Decree 3-A, Presidential Decree 1084, as amended, and Executive Order 543 delegating full Presidential power for PRA to approve all reclamation projects. The PRA actions shall be done in collaboration with the Office of the President, DOJ, OGCC, DENR and the DILG.

For compliance.

Philippine Reclamation Authority

By:
ANDREA D. DOMINGO
General Manager/CEO

Noted:
Hon. RAMON B. REVILLA, SR.
Chairman of the Board

(PDI - Feb 1, 4, 11 & 18, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
KOBELCO COMPRESSORS AND MACHINERY PHILIPPINES CORP. G/F PDAF Bldg., Buendia Ave., cor. Edsa, Makati City	Masahiko Ieda	Chief Operation Officer
ACCENTURE, INC. MSE Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Johnny Ferry Hamonangan	Regional Rice Team Leader
PERFETTI VAN MELLE EXPORT FAR EAST LIMITED 16/F, Octagon Ctr., San Miguel Ave., Ortigas, Pasig City	Markus Schmidt	Regional General Manager for Chupa Chups and Smint
NYK FIL-JAPAN SHIPPING CORP. 2/F, TDG/NYK Harbor Center Bldg., Railroad cor. 23rd & 24th Sts., Port Area, Manila	Hiroshi Terada	Manager-Japanese Accounts
PHILIPPINE COMPUTER ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL, INC. 30/F Philamlife Tower, 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Joy M. Balmadres	Country Manager
SAEMAEUL TRADING INC. 24 Gen. San Luis St., Brgy. Batis, San Juan, Metro Manila	Jae Ok Yoon (w/o Jang)	Manager
KRAFT FOODS (PHILS.) INC. 8378 Dr. Santos Ave., BF Homes, Parañaque City	Arjun Bhowmik	Manager, Sucat Plant
FLUOR DANIEL, INC. PHILIPPINES 3/F, Asian Star Bldg., Asean Drive, FCC, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Erwin Juliaan Kunaat Robert Depaep	Senior Material Engineer
FULLER LIFE DIRECT SELLING PHILIPPINES, INC. 2288 Don Chino Roces Ave. Extension, Makati City	Pablo Bautista Perez de Alejo	Managing Director
AYALA LAND, INC. Tower One, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Ave., Makati City	Voon Yin Liew	Brand Construction Manager
ROA SYSTEMS CO., LTD. -MANILA BRANCH 19/F GT Tower Int'l., 6813 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Ranjan Mujoo	Business Analyst
ROA SYSTEMS CO., LTD. -MANILA BRANCH 19/F GT Tower Int'l., 6813 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Yukinori Fujishima	Chief System Engineer
ROA SYSTEMS CO., LTD. -MANILA BRANCH 19/F GT Tower Int'l., 6813 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Lakshmi Narayana Tadikonda	System Analyst
ROA SYSTEMS CO., LTD. -MANILA BRANCH 19/F GT Tower Int'l., 6813 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Sandeep Jayant Kulkarni	Japanese Coordinator
ROA SYSTEMS CO., LTD. -MANILA BRANCH 19/F GT Tower Int'l., 6813 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Yoichi Saito	Chief System Engineer
ROA SYSTEMS CO., LTD. -MANILA BRANCH 19/F GT Tower Int'l., 6813 Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Kazuaki Miyake	Chief System Engineer
WCL SOLUTIONS (PHIL.) CORPORATION 28/F Tower 2, The Enterprise Center, 6766 Ayala Ave., cor Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Masaharu Tamaki	Special Advisor

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

f: LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI-Feb. 1, 2007)

SPORTS

Wizards keep East lead

WASHINGTON—GILBERT ARENAS scored 36 points and had 11 assists to lead the Washington Wizards past Detroit, 104-99, here Tuesday, keeping his team atop the NBA Eastern Conference.

DeShawn Stevenson scored 15 points and Caron Butler added 13 and five steals for the Wizards, who improved to 27-17 to stretch their conference edge over Detroit, 25-18, to 1 1/2 games.

"We are just playing with a lot of confidence right now," Wizards coach Eddie Jordan said. "It's very early and there are a lot of games to be played."

The Wizards improved to 13-2 against East foes despite losing forward Antawn Jamison after just 5:31 with a sprained left knee.

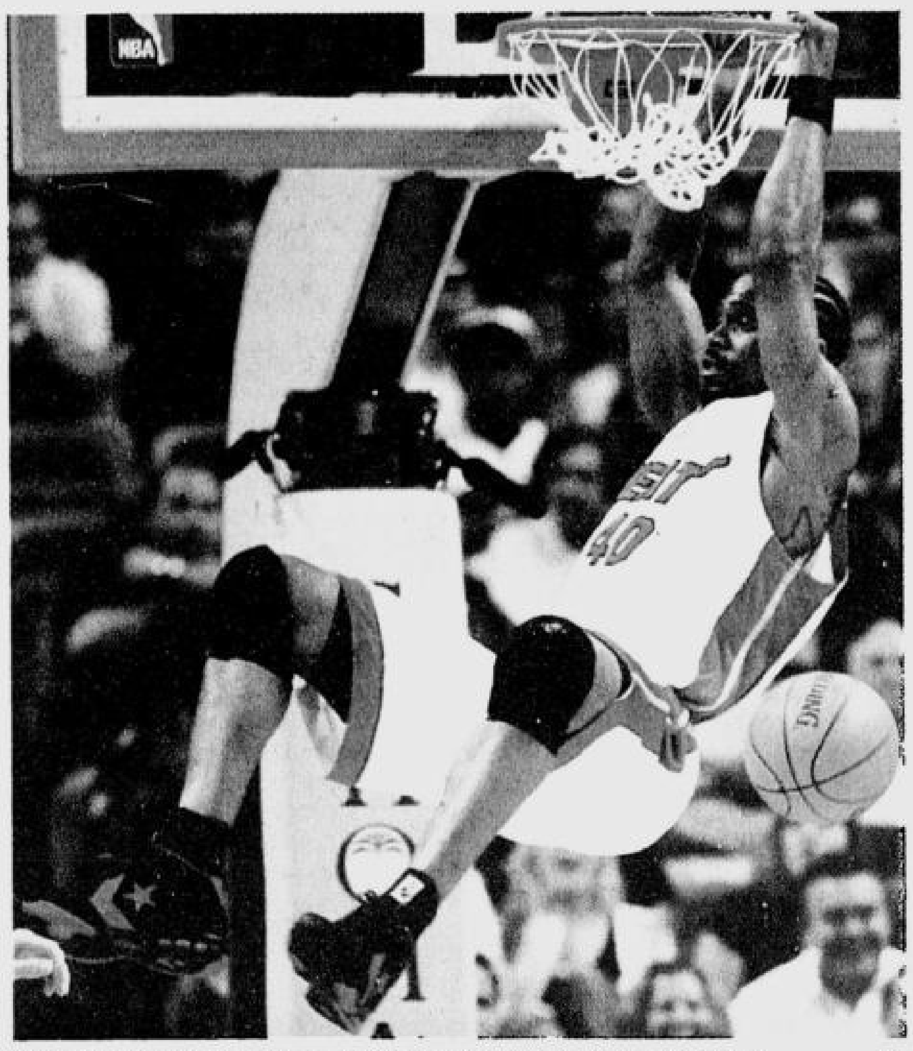
"It's a great honor from the way we started the season to going on the type of run that we're on now as we approach the All-Star break," Wizards swingman Jarvis Hayes said. "This is great."

Stevenson scored eight points in the first quarter as the Wizards opened a 30-18 lead.

"We got some big stops early and made shots," Stevenson said. "We got our lead and kept fighting and pushing and kept our lead."

Arenas hit a 3-pointer from the top of the key to ignite a 7-0 Wizards run as Washington pushed the lead as large as 44-25 with 6:45 remaining in the second quarter.

"We're better than that," Detroit guard Richard Hamilton said. "We know that they are a great first-quarter team. We expect them to come out and try to hit first, but we just didn't get it done."



UDONIS Haslem highlights Miami's win over Milwaukee with a slam. AFP

"We just played hard," Arenas said. "We hit shots and we had a big lead and we just managed it. We didn't try anything outrageous. They were playing with their heels back so they had to make all the gambling mistakes. We just capitalized on everything."

Jamison, who averages 19.7 points and 8.1 rebounds a game, will not travel with the team to their next game at Toronto.

"We don't know exactly what is wrong yet," Jordan said. "He has been sore. He is going to stay and get an MRI on Thursday and we will take it from there."

Chauncey Billups had 24 points and eight assists and Tayshaun Prince scored 19 for the Pistons.

"We let one slip away," Billups said. "They had us down 10 early, so we had an uphill battle the whole game. It's frustrating to lose these games, but that is a good team. I get a lot more frustrated when we come out and play teams that really should not beat us."

In other games, it was Cleveland 124, Golden State 97; Indiana 103, Boston 96; New York 99, LA Lakers 94; Miami 110, Milwaukee 80; Dallas 122, Seattle 102.

In New York, Kobe Bryant was suspended and denied an expedited appeal, forcing the superstar guard to sit out the Los Angeles Lakers' 99-94 loss to the New York Knicks.

Bryant was banished one game for striking San Antonio's Manu Ginobili in the face during a game Sunday, a suspension that stunned the guard since it came on what he considered an accidental contact.

Ginobili, a Spurs guard who helped Argentina win Olympic gold at the 2004 Athens Games, was struck an elbow from Bryant with 2.7 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter of the Lakers' 96-94 overtime home loss Sunday.

Ginobili needed medical attention before overtime but returned to the game.

"I'm surprised and shocked by it, actually," Bryant said. "It's basketball. You catch people with elbows accidentally all the time. I felt horrible about it." *AFP*

NBA STANDINGS

Eastern Conference			
ATLANTIC	W	L	GB
New Jersey (4)	22	23	-
Toronto (8)	22	23	-
New York	20	27	3
Philadelphia	14	32	8.5
Boston	12	32	9.5
CENTRAL	W	L	GB
Detroit (2)	25	18	-
Chicago (3)	26	19	-
Cleveland (5)	26	19	-
Indiana (6)	24	21	2
Milwaukee	18	27	8
SOUTHEAST	W	L	GB
Washington (1)	27	17	-
Orlando (7)	23	22	4.4
Miami	20	25	7.5
Atlanta	16	27	10.5
Charlotte	16	28	11
Western Conference			
NORTHWEST	W	L	GB
Utah (4)	29	17	-
Denver (7)	22	20	5
Minnesota (8)	22	22	6
Portland	19	27	10
Seattle	17	28	11.5
PACIFIC	W	L	GB
Phoenix (2)	36	9	-
LA Lakers (6)	27	18	9
LA Clippers	22	22	13?
Golden State	21	24	15
Sacramento	17	26	18
SOUTHWEST	W	L	GB
Dallas (1)	37	9	-
San Antonio (3)	32	14	5
Houston (5)	28	16	8
NO/Oklahoma City	19	25	17
Memphis	12	34	25

INQUIRER GRAPHICS: LOUIE BACANI

Tiger opens Dubai defense

DUBAI—TIGER WOODS DEFENDS HIS DUBAI Desert Classic title starting Thursday coming off his seventh straight PGA tournament win at the Buick Invitational in California on Sunday. The world No. 1 captured the Gulf region's premier trophy at his third attempt last year defeating South African Ernie Els in a dramatic playoff. And he says that after a winter break during which he and his wife Elin announced that they were expecting their first child in the summer that all was set fair for what he hoped would be a stellar year. Els holds the record for wins in the European PGA tournament after triumphing in 1994, 2002 and 2005 and he says that he is out to go one better than last year, having been boosted by his year-opening third place finish in Qatar last week. The three-time Major winner is back up to fourth place in the world rankings as he battles back to his best form after two years of fitness problems brought on by a knee injury. Both Woods and Els were at pains though to stress that it would be much more than a two-horse race with nine of Europe's victorious Ryder Cup team in action headed by England's Paul Casey, a winner already this year at Abu Dhabi two weeks ago. Casey is joined in a top-class field by K-Club teammates Darren Clarke, Sergio Garcia, Robert Karlsson, Paul McGinley, Henrik Stenson, Lee Westwood, Colin Montgomerie and David Howell. *AFP*

'Golden Boy' hires Pacquiao trainer Roach

WORLD BOXING COUNCIL SUPER welterweight champion Oscar De La Hoya yesterday picked Freddie Roach as his next trainer for his May 5 showdown with pound-for-pound icon Floyd Mayweather Jr, ending weeks of speculation as to who will assist the Golden Boy in what will probably his last career fight.

The announcement was made yesterday to a throng of mediamen, although Roach had been the favorite since De La Hoya dumped former trainer Floyd Mayweather Sr. because he didn't want to "put a wedge between family members."

Observers, however, noted that Mayweather Sr.'s $2-million price tag assisted De La Hoya's decision making.

Roach is the 2003 Boxing Writers Association of America's Trainer of the Year and the leading candidate to win the honor again this year, and has been widely credited behind the meteoric rise of Filipino icon Manny Pacquiao.

"Freddie and I have known each other for many years, and I am very happy that at this point in my career he has accepted my offer to be my trainer," said De La Hoya.

"I'm happy to be working with Oscar for this fight, which for a trainer is not only a dream opportunity, but a great challenge and responsibility," said Roach. "I'm going to do everything in my power, and I know Oscar will as well, to ensure victory on May 5th."

According to Golden Boy Promotions vice president Eric Gomez, pre-camp workouts have already begun for De La Hoya, with his training camp set to officially kick off in Puerto Rico on March 1.

Roach, meanwhile, pointed out that he will train Pacquiao during the initial stages of his camp for the In jin Chi fight, before turning over the training chores to his Wild Card gym assistant Justin Fortune, with whom Pacquiao enjoys a great working relationship. *Salven Lagumbay, contributor*

Arum off to Macau

TOP RANK CHIEF Bob Arum is set to fly to Macau from the US on Tuesday next week to begin ironing out the kinks hounding boxing superstar Manny Pacquiao's next bout.

Pacquiao is scheduled to face Korean In jin Chi at the Wynn Hotel in Macau on April 28, a bout that has left a trail of loose ends even with its official announcement yet to take place.

Arum said he will leave after the Super Bowl, and indicated that a press conference will be held in Macau to formally announce the fight on Wednesday next week.

There have been concerns over the availability of a venue to host such a mammoth event as Pacquiao versus Chi, with Wynn Macau reportedly not having the facility to hold a boxing event. The biggest arena in Macau, according to reports, only holds some 7,000 spectators.

And because of the legal battle between Top Rank and Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions for the right to promote Pacquiao, cable giant HBO has pulled out of the television coverage because it doesn't want to be dragged into a court war. *Salven Lagumbay, contributor*

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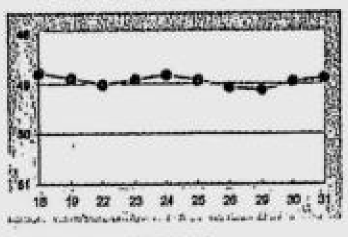
Swabe ang dating, lakas ng hatak.
Max Diesel Max
PETRON DIESEL MAX
Above all Genuis

Naia 3 to open finally in late March, early April

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



JANUARY

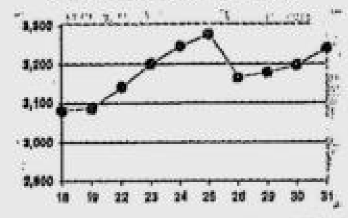
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱48.90 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 31, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B5)

Shares close higher

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.33-PERCENT higher yesterday as investors remained confident the country's economy will continue to grow this year after GDP hit 5.4 percent in 2006, dealers said.

They said gains were helped after the government announced shortly before the market opened that it was keeping its forecast of gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 6.1-6.7 percent for 2007.

The composite index rose 42.61 points to 3,239.27, the day's high, after hitting a low of 3,196.66.

The broader all-share index rose 24.09 points to 2,012.55.

Gainers led losers 66 to 54 with 54 unchanged. Turnover was 2.66 billion shares worth P4.56 billion. *AFP*

DOTC chief '100% sure'

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE NINOY AQUINO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT terminal 3 (Naia 3) will open finally in late March or early April, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza told reporters yesterday.

"We are just looking for the right date," he said.

He said the terminal would initially open in late March or early April for three airlines and the commercial operations would be completed over the course of the year.

He did not identify which airlines would be operating from the terminal. He said many airlines were naturally competing for their preferred locations and the request of Philippine Airlines and Cebu Pacific to have both their domestic and international operations in a single terminal were also being considered.

Mendoza said the government was also considering using two terminals for international flights just to accommodate the airlines' requests.

He added that the opening was "100-percent sure" as there were no more legal hurdles and construction work was now being completed.

Last year, the DOTC had warned contractor Takenaka Corp. of Japan that the department would get another firm to complete the project if an agreement was not reached by end-2006

The contractor was tapped in June 2005 by the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) to complete Naia 3 after taking over the project from the controversial Philippine International Air Ter-

NAIA 3/ B2

NEDA CHIEF

RP must open ports sector

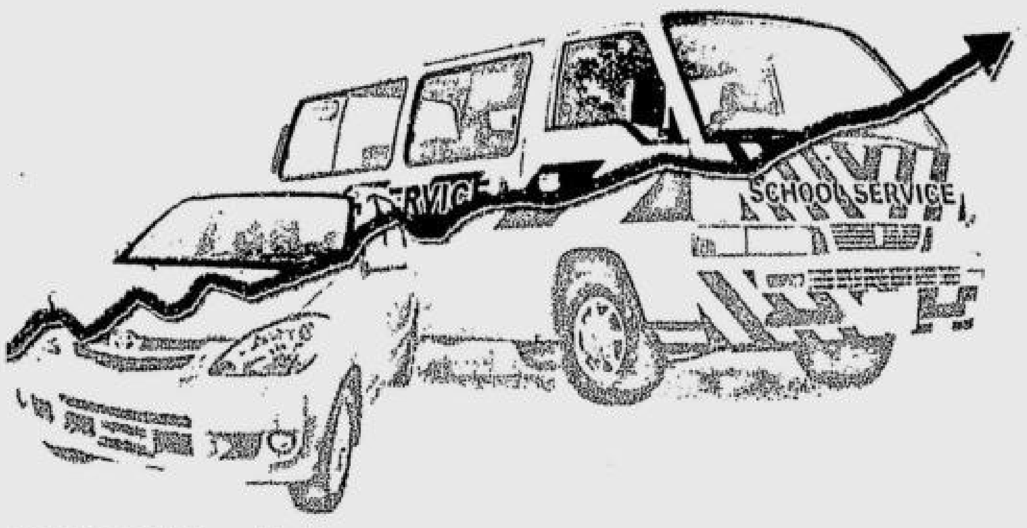
By Michelle V. Remo

ECONOMIC PLANNING SECRETARY Romulo Neri is pushing for the entry of more harbor operators into the country, saying the lack of competition in the ports industry was to blame for the high cost of sea transport in the Philippines.

Neri, who is also director general of the National Economic and Development Authority, said the high cost of shipping goods within and from the country had been a major drag on the country's competitiveness.

The country's chief economist noted a study by the Asian Development Bank showing that the average cost of exporting goods from the Philippines was $1,336 a container. This was much higher than the $848 if the goods would

RP MUST/ B3



AVANZA (left), Urvan (right)

Vehicle makers see growing demand among entrepreneurs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

VEHICLES AIMED AT ENTREPRENEURS ARE very much in demand as Universal Motors Corp. and Toyota Motors Philippines Inc. gear up programs that offer models for use as shuttles, school buses and taxi cabs.

UMC senior vice president Elizabeth H. Lee said demand for the firm's Nissan Urvan more than doubled to 145 units a month since it launched its Ur Van Ur Business campaign in March 2006.

"We received some 10,000 inquiries since we started the UVUB," Lee said. "Because of (the program), Urvan has become our best-selling model."

The campaign had created a "positive bandwagon effect" in that UMC's competitors have launched similar entrepreneurial programs as well, she said.

Lee explained that most buyers use the Urvan as shuttle service vehicles, school buses, cargo vans, and—for local government units—ambulances.

"We have even received suggestions to use the Urvan for mobile businesses like roving eateries and even dog-grooming shops," she added.

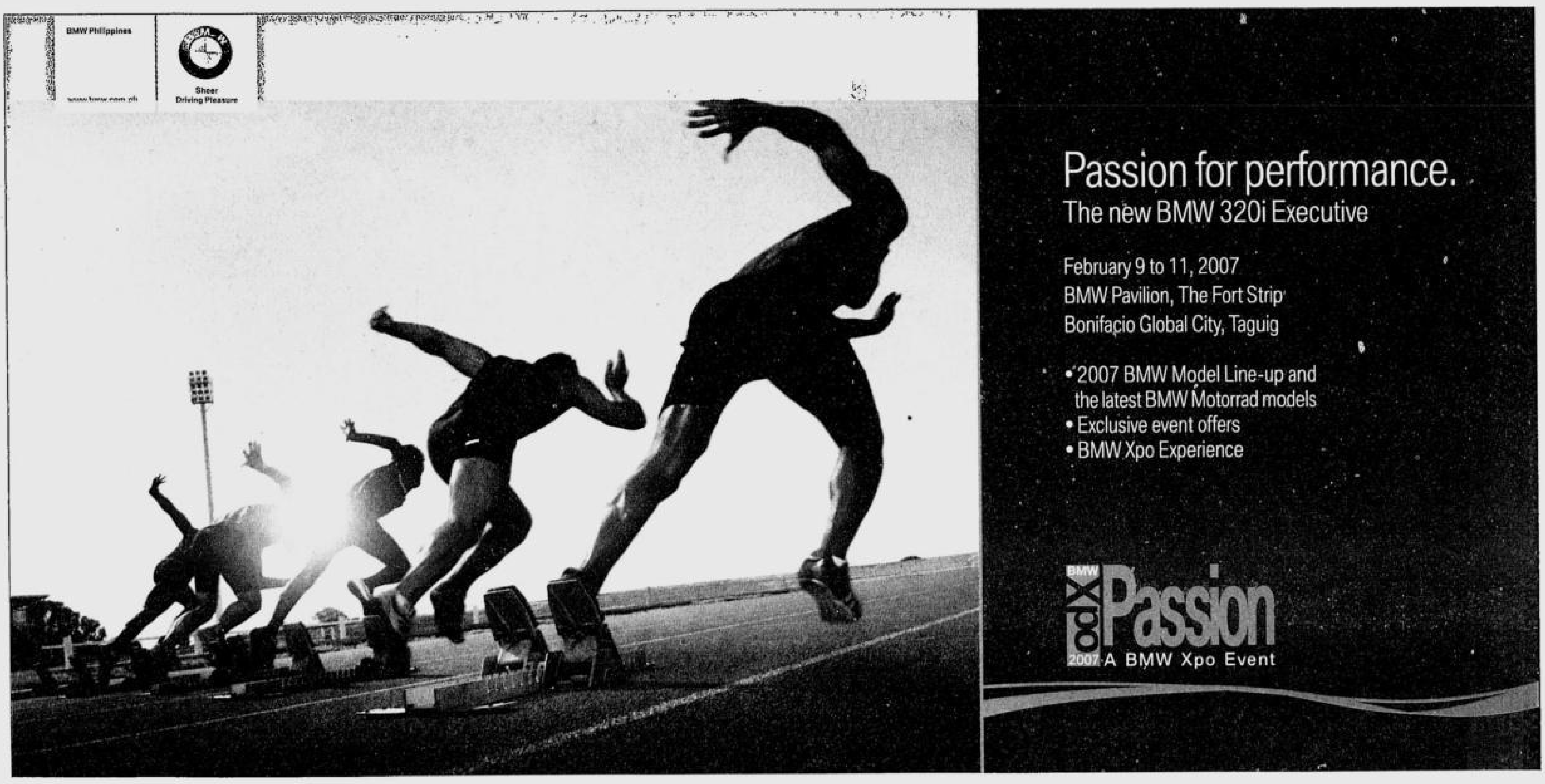
Yesterday, UMC announced it had partnered with the Asian Institute of Management and the credit cooperative Center for Community Transformation to put up an "Asenso Negosyo Academy" where Urvan buyers would be trained in the science of entrepreneurship, marketing and financial management.

The training program makes up the third phase of the UVUB program. The second phase, dubbed "Ipadala Mo, Negosyo Mo" was a team-up with Philippine National Bank and offered direct banking services for Filipinos based abroad.

Also, Toyota Motors Philippines Corp. is expecting the reservation orders for its Avanza wagon to pile up once the Department of Transportation and Communications and related agencies approve the vehicle's use for taxi cab services.

Current government rules allow only

VEHICLE/ B5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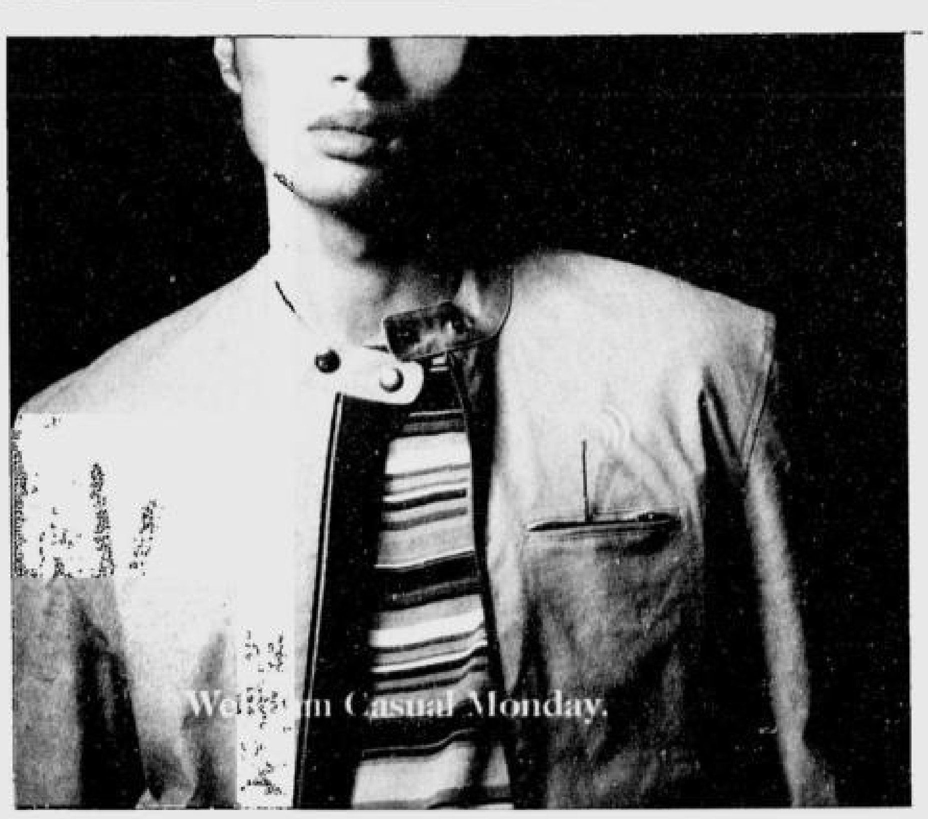

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Naia 3 ...

From page B1

minals Co. (Piatco).

Work stopped when a legal battle for control of the Naia 3 erupted between the government, Piatco and the project's original proponent, Asia's Emerging Dragon Corp.

The government, through Miaa, has since paid Piatco P3 billion for the investments it had made before its contract was voided by the courts. This allowed Miaa to secure a writ of possession that gave it authority to negotiate with Takenaka on the remaining construction work.

From cause to cost

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

FOR SNACKS IN THE LAST MEETING, the economic team of this cute administration fried the Lopez conglomerate's Meralco.

Composed of Cabinet members, the team basically agreed that Meralco, as a power distribution monopoly, is a major cause of the high cost of manufacturing.

And so according to our Palace sources, the Cabinet now leans toward the proposal in business for "open access."

Thus, big power users, such as factories (oh, and malls the size of Singapore) can bypass Meralco and save money by connecting directly to power plants.

Actually, Trade Secretary Peter Favila presented the idea to the Cabinet, since Gloriaetta tasked him to head the "competitiveness" council.

Well, competitiveness was a big issue at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, which Gloriaetta attended as guest speaker.

One of the concerns on the Philippines, coming from world business leaders no less, was the high cost of power here.

It is still the second highest in all of Asia.

At the same time, Favila himself just announced billions of pesos of investments lined up for the Philippines. The investors also complained about high power rates.

It thus seems that the Meralco problem also causes Favila some kingsize headaches. Maybe that's why he is pushing for the "open access."

Okay, so the big industries can go straight to power plants and save money. How about the guys down here in my barangay? They still use electricity, don't they?

***

Fellow newsmen called me about those rumors about somebody's attempt to bring out of the country some $200 million. *(Breaktime Jan. 29)*

They wanted to know the identity of the individual or the group behind such a big transaction.

But precisely, they were just that—rumors. Even the banking group that was said to have applied for the remittance, in behalf of a client, privately denied the rumors.

Invariably, my colleagues gave me their own speculation on the "who," and surely enough, names of politicos and cronies (past and present) led the roll call.

It is also possible that, if the rumors turn out to be true, somebody is merely fronting for somebody else.

The last time I checked, that's how they launder dirty money.

***

That exclusive club with limited membership, the so-called "Hyatt 10," may still be wielding immeasurable influence on this cute administration of Gloriaetta.

Members of the club are involved in an IT company that is doing business—multimillion peso contracts, in fact—with the Bureau of Customs.

As a way to fight technical smuggling, the BOC is spending a fortune to computerize its operations.

The bureau awarded the contract to the foreign firm Unisys.

In turn, Unisys subcontracted part of the job to a company called e-Connect.

Guess who's behind it? One of the investors of e-Connect is said to be former customs commissioner Bert Lina, who is a member of the Hyatt 10.

Managing the company is another Hyatt 10 luminary by the name of former BIR commissioner Guillermo Parayno.

Tell you what. In this country, it still pays to have the right connections—the Hyatt incident notwithstanding.

***

Based on the pronouncement of Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, the BOC still does not deserve the "cash bonus" for exceeding its 2006 collection target.

Most likely, the BOC will get the incentives under the law, amounting to 20 percent of the collection in excess of the target.

The Department of Finance put the BOC "excess" collection at P2 billion. The BOC should get P400 million to be divided among the personnel.

Pimentel pointed out, correctly, that the BOC exceeded its target not by its own doing, such as by stopping smuggling.

My info is that the BOC recorded as 2006 collection some P27 billion in duties on imported refined oil (i.e. fuel), which were not included in the target.

It just so happened that we had to import fuel, because a local refinery closed down.

The good senator forgot to say that, even with such an unexpected BOC collection bonanza from imported fuel, smuggling remains rampant.

My sources in BOC point to the Navotas fishing port as the smuggling syndicates' private oil well.

And the smuggling happens right under the noses of government people, who are however helpless because the smugglers are heavily armed.

Police, help!

***

If you monitor radio programs, you'll know that the leading detractor these days of BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag is Quezon City treasurer Vic Endriga, who prefixes his name with a "Dr."

And so here is my take on Endriga's attacks on the BIR.

Local government units collect revenues from property tax and business permits. You cannot possibly hide those lots, for instance, even if you are a magician, such as certain Comelec officials.

On the other hand, the BIR collects mainly value added and income taxes.

It is a cat and mouse game. Businessmen always hide their true income, while the BIR tries to catch them.

That is not easy, especially in big business, which hires the best tax lawyers and accountants.

Solution: More training on catching tax fraud for BIR.

That, according to DOF undersecretary Roberto Tan, one of the more outstanding career guys at DOF, remains the thrust of the department.

Good.

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STATEMENT OF CONDITION

(Head Office and Branches)
As of December 29,2006

ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Items	₱ 9,123,383,484
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	46,582,325,829
Due from Other Banks	24,066,817,195
Interbank Loans Receivable	61,563,161,038
Trading Account Securities (Net)	4,384,546,564
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)	84,081,062,114
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)	227,111,325,521
Equity Investments (Net)	24,792,321,709
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (Net)	8,391,611,372
Other Assets (Net):	46,518,526,421
Property Owned/Acquired	25,667,232,980
Others	20,851,293,441
TOTAL ASSETS	₱ 536,615,081,247
LIABILITIES	
Demand Deposits	₱ 21,379,852,974
Savings Deposits	273,716,780,709
Time Deposits	142,905,823,099
Special/Other Deposits	333,843,508
Due to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	212,592,697
Outstanding Checks / Payment Orders	1,225,840,954
Bills Payable:	2,141,735,730
BSP - Rediscounts/Special Programs	237,986,640
Interbank Borrowings	758,935,006
Others	1,144,814,084
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits	1,477,442,909
Other Liabilities	16,664,886,211
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (Inclusive of Unamortized Premium/Discount)	15,830,440,222
TOTAL LIABILITIES	475,889,239,013
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	
Capital Stock	36,145,387,000
Surplus	14,599,838,173
Surplus Reserves	637,111,719
Other Capital Accounts	9,343,505,342
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	60,725,842,234
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	₱ 536,615,081,247
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	₱ 12,853,931,207
Bills for Collection	1,417,370,037
Spot/Future Exchange Bought	12,699,944,520
Spot/Future Exchange Sold	32,118,493,049
Assets Held in Trust Investment Management Agreement	109,895,035,316
Invested In:	
Government Securities	83,563,394,720
Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stocks	13,013,027,729
Loans and Discounts	3,945,603,224
Other Assets	9,373,009,643
Accountabilities:	
Trust and Other Fiduciary	71,423,490,425
Common Trust Funds	25,413,280,186
Investment/Fund Management	6,972,834,053
Unearned Income and Other Accountabilities	6,085,430,652
Other Contingent Accounts	10,497,720,841
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	₱ 179,482,494,970

*Other Information:

1. Deposits of:		
a) Government		₱ 453,764,639
b) Banks		837,123,787
c) Trust Department		111,689,587
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
	Small Enterprises	Medium Enterprises
Prescribed Ratio of Compliance:	6%	2%
Actual Compliance:	6.60%	14.17%

3. Amount of non-performing loans	15,657,484,865
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio	5.24%
5. Amount of classified loans and other risk assets	53,134,496,928
6. General provision for loan and other losses	2,243,860,053
7. Specific provision for loan and other losses	14,564,072,037
8. Return on Equity (ROE)	10.38%
9. Amount of DOSRI loans/advances	14,770,618,066
10. Ratio of DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio	4.94%
11. Amount of past due DOSRI loans/advances	27,700,000
12. Ratio of past due DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio	0.01%
A. Directors, Officers, Stockholders & Related Interests (DOSRI):	
i. Loans, other credit accommodations & guarantees classified as DOSRI accounts under regulations existing prior to the effectivity of BSP Circular No. 423	₱ 8,963,745,211
ii. New DOSRI loans, other credit accommodations & guarantees granted after the effectivity of BSP Circular No. 423	1,221,788,424
B. Non-DOSRI Loans prior to BSP Circular No. 423 dated March 15, 2004:	
i. Loans, other credit accommodations and guarantees, as well as availments of previously approved loans and committed credit lines not considered DOSRI accounts prior to the issuance of BSP Circular No. 423 but are allowed a transition period as provided in said Circular	4,584,984,431

*Approved to conform with Circular No. [illegible] dated August 17, 1999 and Memorandum to All Banks dated November 29, 1999

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
CITY OF MAKATI)SS.

We, Arthur Ty and Joshua E. Naing of the above-mentioned Bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) JOSHUA E. NAING*
EVP-Controller

(Sgd.) ARTHUR TY
President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 24th day of January, 2007 at Makati City, affiants exhibiting to me their Community Tax Certificate No. 20527236 issued at Makati City on January 27, 2006 and Community Tax Certificate No. 23971726, issued at Taytay, Rizal on January 26, 2006, respectively.

Doc. No. [illegible]
Page No. [illegible]
Book No. [illegible]
Series of 2007

(Sgd.) RUTH SALOME A. MAGPAYO
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2007
PTR No. [illegible] Makati City

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION

(Bank and its Subsidiaries and Affiliates)
As of December 29, 2006

ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Items	₱ 10,156,439,694
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	54,239,841,683
Due from Other Banks	30,588,453,581
Interbank Loans Receivable	62,693,161,038
Trading Account Securities (Net)	24,337,697,472
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)	108,288,099,169
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)	275,994,990,647
Equity Investments (Net)	10,353,357,204
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (Net)	11,252,297,023
Other Assets (Net):	53,633,781,367
Property Owned/Acquired	29,147,086,816
Others	24 486,694,551
TOTAL ASSETS	₱ 641,538,118,878
LIABILITIES	
Demand Deposits	₱ 23,935,863,481
Savings Deposits	281,990,418,901
Time Deposits	186,033,719,788
Special/Other Deposits	333,843,508
Due to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	232,618,139
Outstanding Checks / Payment Orders	1,580,336,844
Bills Payable:	42,641,645,760
BSP - Rediscounts/Special Programs	237,986,640
Interbank Borrowings	758,935,006
Deposit Substitutes	30,330,544,246
Others	11,314,179,868
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits	4,865,728,622
Other Liabilities	20,462,647,408
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (Inclusive of Unamortized Premium/Discount)	15,830,440,222
TOTAL LIABILITIES	577,907,262,673
Minority Interest in Allied Undertakings/Subsidiaries/Affiliates	2,905,013,971
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	
Capital Stock	36,145,387,000
Surplus	14,599,838,173
Surplus Reserves	637,111,719
Other Capital Accounts	9,343,505,342
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	60,725,842,234
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	₱ 641,538,118,878
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	₱ 13,000,438,265
Bills for Collection	1,447,486,685
Spot/Future Exchange Bought	12,699,944,520
Spot/Future Exchange Sold	32,118,493,049
Assets Held in Trust Investment Management Agreement	110,188,530,442
Invested In:	
Government Securities	83,563,394,720
Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stocks	13,155,706,278
Loans and Discounts	3,945,603,224
Other Assets	9,523,826,220
Accountabilities:	
Trust and Other Fiduciary	71,715,457,105
Common Trust Funds	25,413,280,186
Investment/Fund Management	6,972,834,053
Unearned Income and Other Accountabilities	6,086,959,098
Other Contingent Accounts	10,586,891,667
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	₱ 180,041,784,628

*Other Information:

1. Deposits of:	
a) Government	₱ 453,764,639
b) Banks	870,377,346
c) Trust Department	262,358,464

2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries:

- a) First Metro International Investment Co., Ltd. - HK
- b) First Metro Investment Corporation
- c) Philippine Savings Bank
- d) MBTC Venture Capital Corporation
- e) Metropolitan Bank (Bahamas)Ltd.
- f) Metrobank Card Corporation (formerly Unibancard Corporation)
- g) MB Remittance Centre, Ltd.-HK
- h) Metro Remittance Center, Inc., NY (formerly Asia Money Link Corp.)
- i) Metro Remittance-Italia SpA
- j) ORIX Metro Leasing and Finance Corporation
- k) Solid Philippines Venture and Capital Corporation
- l) MBTC Exchange Service, GmbH, (Austria)
- m) Metro Remittance (UK) Ltd.
- n) Metro Remittance Singapore PTE Ltd.
- o) Metro Remittance Center, S.A.- Spain
- p) Philbancor Venture Capital Corporation

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
CITY OF VAKATI)SS.

We, Arthur Ty and Joshua E. Naing of the above-mentioned Bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above Statement of Condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) JOSHUA E. NAING*
EVP-Controller

(Sgd.) ARTHUR TY
President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 24th day of January, 2007 at Makati City, affiants exhibiting to me their Community Tax Certificate No. 23527236, issued at Makati City on January 27, 2006 and Community Tax Certificate No. 23971726, issued at Taytay, Rizal on January 26, 2006, respectively.

Doc. No. 104
Page No. 63
Book No. III
Series of 2007

(Sgd.) RUTH SALOME A. MAGPAYO
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2007
PTR No. [illegible] Makati City

Member of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation. Deposits Insured up to ₱250,000 per depositor.

PNOC unit seeks partners for biodiesel projects

Jatropha plantations, refineries are top picks

By Abigail L. Ho

JAKARTA, INDONESIA—PNOC-Alternative Fuels Corp. is finalizing partnerships with at least 10 local and foreign companies for various biodiesel-related projects all over the country, particularly in Mindanao.

Speaking at the Biofuels and Feedstocks conference here yesterday, PNOC-AFC president Peter Anthony Abaya said that among those interested in undertaking biodiesel-related projects in the country were Korea's Samsung Corp., Japan's Sumitomo Corp. and JGC, the United States' National Biofuels, Malaysia's Biogreen Energy Sdn Bhd and HDZ, and Brunei National Petroleum Co.

Local firms Chemrez Technologies Inc., Limketkai Manufacturing Co., Enerfuse (composed of new oil players Flying V, Unioil Petroleum Philippines Inc., Seaoil Philippines Inc. and Eastern Petroleum Corp.), Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Petron Corp. were also eyeing biodiesel projects.

He said National Biofuels was eyeing two 200,000-metric ton (MT) refineries while HDZ wanted to build two refineries. PetroleumBrunei is considering putting up a biodiesel plant, while Chemrez eyes one refinery on its own and one in partnership with PNOC-AFC.

Biogreen is planning a jatropha nursery and plantation.

Limketkai, an edible oil producer, is keen on putting up a 100,00-MT plant. The company is considering giving up its current business to shift to the production of biodiesel from jatropha, Abaya said.

PNOC-AFC had signed a memorandum of understanding with Samsung for an P8.2-billion jatropha plantation and refinery project. The company said Sumitomo had agreed to conduct a feasibility study on the establishment of a biofuels central terminal in Bataan.

Abaya said PNOC-AFC was also in talks with government agencies for the provision of land that could be used for jatropha nurseries and plantations.

PNOC-AFC is in discussions with the Philippine Army for 137,537 hectares of land in Fort Magsaysay, Camp O'Donnell, Kibaritan, Mayapay, Torrey Barracks, Camp Peralta and Bungon, all in Mindanao.

The Department of Justice had likewise offered three penal colonies with a total land area of 50,000 hectares, he said.

RP must open . . .

From page B1

come from Thailand, $335 from China, and $382 from Singapore.

"(Shipping) is costly because of lack of competition. We need to open up to more players to reduce cost," Neri told reporters in an interview after a congressional hearing on the Philippines' national income accounts for 2006.

He said the current setup of allowing only two players to operate the two major harbors in the country—the north and south harbors—was disadvantageous to businesses.

International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) was granted the franchise by the Philippine Ports Authority to operate the manila international container terminal or the north harbor, while Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI) has the contract the operate the south harbor.

ICTSI has a 25-year contract expiring in 2013, while that of ATI's will also expire in the same year.

Services provided in the terminals include those related with logistics, storage, and stevedoring, among others.

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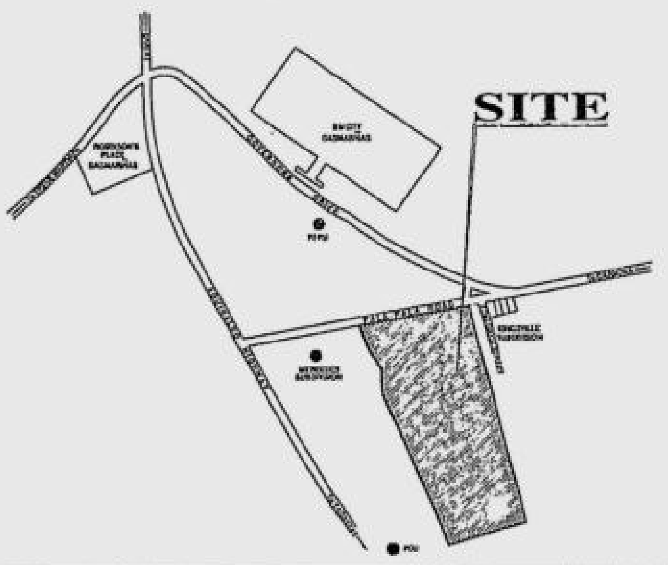

SECURITY BANK

Security Bank Centre
6776 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
(632) 867-6788

STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of December 29, 2006

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items		P 2,890,651,931
Due from Bangko Sentral		9,900,964,472
Due from Other Banks		1,982,645,025
Interbank Loans Receivable		7,238,603,077
Trading Account Securities (Net)		57,643,628,455
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		2,062,847,714
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)		29,623,412,933
Equity Investments (Net)		2,193,204,259
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		1,299,725,717
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		1,831,284,511
Others		5,052,596,232
TOTAL ASSETS		P 121,719,564,326
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits		P 20,902,663,124
Savings Deposits		42,111,243,956
Time Deposits		26,623,494,021
Special/Other Deposits		96,444,787
Due to Bangko Sentral		43,957,433
Due to Banks		17,254,359
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		482,409,251
Bills Payable:		
BSP-Rediscounts/Special Programs		133,969,758
Interbank Borrowings		7,717,834,558
Others		171,923,754
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		530,419,166
Other Liabilities		6,646,676,643
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (incl. of Unamortized Premium/Discount)		2,999,316,424
TOTAL LIABILITIES		P 108,477,607,234
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock		P 4,981,626,239
Surplus		4,373,486,026
Surplus Reserves		214,800,000
Other Capital Accounts		3,672,044,827
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		P 13,241,957,092
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		P 121,719,564,326
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit		P 2,040,981,556
Bills for Collection		2,317,731,524
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		40,247,081,100
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		39,892,857,746
Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements		8,471,217,695
Invested in:		
Government Securities	P 1,521,496,358	
Other Securities, Debt Instruments and Shares of Stock	469,216,032	
Loans and Discounts	4,267,489,718	
Other Assets	2,213,015,587	
Accountabilities:		
Trust and Other Fiduciary	1,882,280,923	
Investment/Fund Management	4,640,231,634	
Unearned Income and Other Accountabilities	1,948,705,138	
Other Contingent Accounts		2,935,421,252
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		P 95,905,290,873

OTHER INFORMATION:

1. Deposits of:

a) Government	2,170,512,006
b) Banks	5,627,448,946
c) Trust Department	836,350,123

2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:

	Small Enterprises	Medium Enterprises
Prescribed Ratio of Compliance:	6%	2%
Actual Compliance:	6.65%	4.89%

3.	Amount of non-performing loans	P 1,693,250,513
4.	Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio	4.27%
5.	Amount of classified loans and other risk assets	10,295,058,000
6.	General provision for loan losses	636,190,548
7.	Specific provision for loan losses	1,976,078,942
8.	Return on Equity (ROE)	17.01%
9.	Amount of DOSRI loans/advances	157,372,373
10.	Ratio of DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio	0.40%
11.	Amount of past due DOSRI loans/advances	0.00
12.	Ratio of past due DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio	0.00

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
CITY OF MAKATI)s.s

We, Alberto S. Villarosa and Joselito E. Mape of the above mentioned Bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(SGD.) JOSELITO E. MAPE
First Vice President

(SGD.) ALBERTO S. VILLAROSA
President & CEO

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO BEFORE ME this 25th day of January, 2007 at City of Makati, affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 24318429, issued at City of Makati on February 27, 2006 and Residence Certificate No. 24318424, issued at City of Makati on February 27, 2006.

(SGD.) *FELIPE I. ILEDAN, JR.*
NOTARY PUBLIC
Until Dec. 31, 2008
PTR No. 5316420
01-02-2007; Manila

Doc. No. 442
Page No. 90
Book No. IV
Series of 2007

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and its Subsidiaries and Affiliates)
As of December 29, 2006

ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Items		P 2,890,651,931
Due from Bangko Sentral		9,900,964,472
Due from Other Banks		2,015,752,427
Interbank Loans Receivable		7,238,603,077
Trading Account Securities (Net)		57,959,635,748
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)		2,062,847,714
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)		31,100,733,487
Equity Investments (Net)		870,257,774
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (Net)		1,349,374,569
Other Assets (Net):		
Property Owned/Acquired		1,873,401,448
Others		5,168,978,927
TOTAL ASSETS		P 122,431,201,574
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits		P 20,769,841,955
Savings Deposits		42,109,565,985
Time Deposits		26,673,494,021
Special/Other Deposits		96,444,787
Due to Bangko Sentral		43,957,433
Due to Banks		17,254,359
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		482,409,251
Bills Payable:		
BSP-Rediscounts/Special Programs		133,969,758
Interbank Borrowings		7,717,834,558
Others		144,916,236
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		608,252,250
Other Liabilities		7,426,560,899
Unsecured Subordinated Debt (incl. of Unamortized Premium/Discount)		2,999,316,424
TOTAL LIABILITIES		P 109,173,837,916
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock		P 4,981,626,239
Surplus		4,373,486,026
Surplus Reserves		214,800,000
Other Capital Accounts		3,687,451,393
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		P 13,257,363,658
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		P 122,431,201,574
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit		P 2,040,981,556
Bills for Collection		2,317,731,524
Spot/Future Exchange Bought		40,247,081,100
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		39,892,857,746
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Invested in:		
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Loans and Discounts	4,267,489,718	
Other Assets	2,213,015,587	
Accountabilities:		
Trust and Other Fiduciary	1,882,280,923	
Investment/Fund Management	4,640,231,634	
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TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		P 95,905,290,873

OTHER INFORMATION:

1. Deposits of:

a) Government	2,170,512,006
b) Banks	5,627,448,946
c) Trust Department	836,350,123

2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries:
   - a) Security Finance, Inc.
   - b) SB Cards Corporation
   - c) SB Forex, Incorporated
   - d) SB Capital Investment Corp.
   - e) Landlink Property Investments (SPV-AMC), Inc.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
CITY OF MAKATI)s.s

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(SGD.) *FELIPE I. ILEDAN, JR.*
NOTARY PUBLIC
Until Dec. 31, 2008
PTR No. 5316420
01-02-2007; Manila

Doc. No. 443
Page No. 90
Book No. IV
Series of 2007

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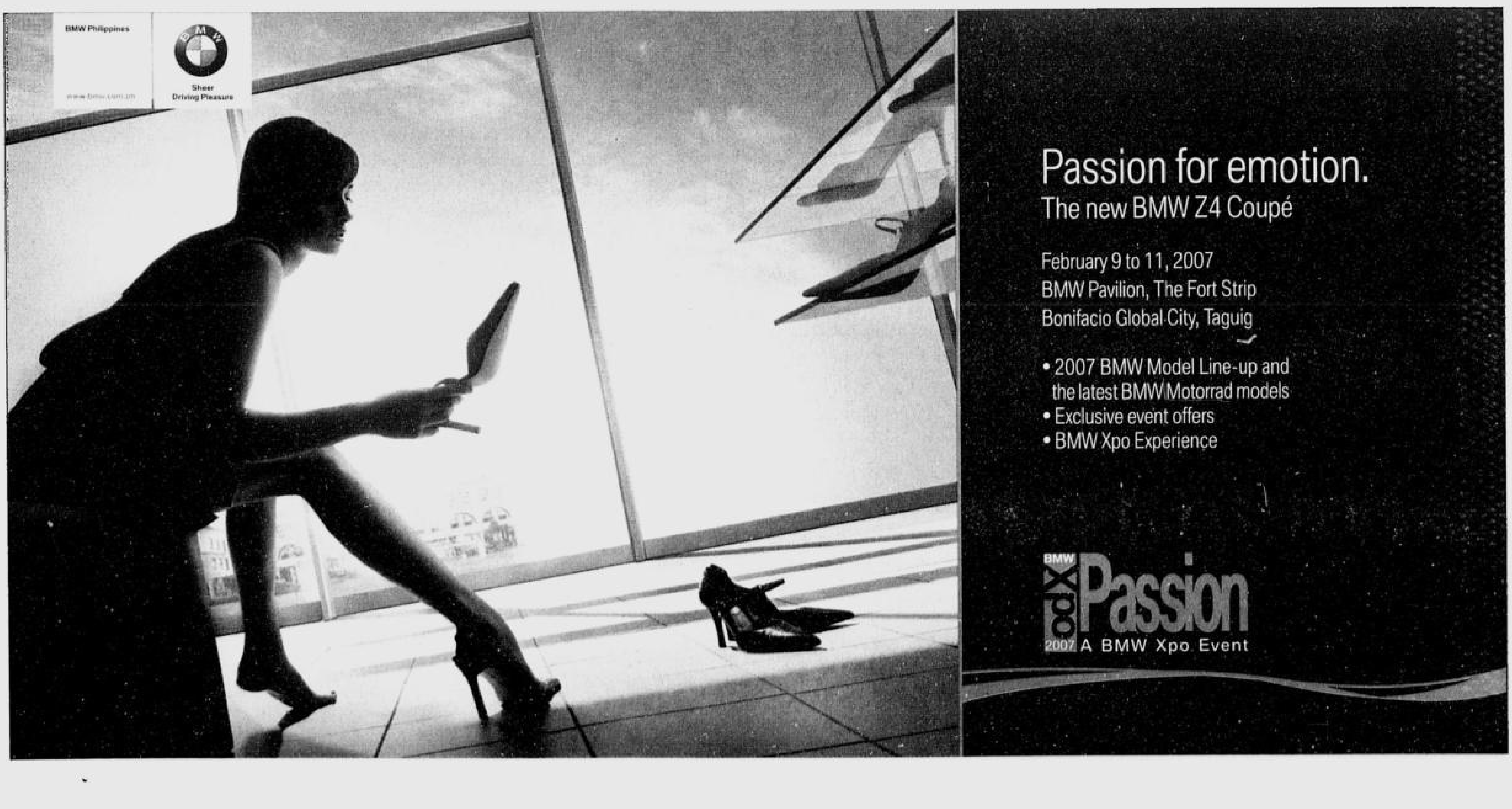

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
Provincial Capitol 8700

OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR

AN OPEN INVITATION TO ALL SUPPLIERS OF MEDICINES

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon (PGB), through the Bids and Awards Committee, is inviting all suppliers of medicines, to participate in its procurement needs of medicines for its six (6) Provincial Hospitals and Twenty Two (22) Provincial Health Stations. The PGB has allotted an annual budget (CY 2007) of One Hundred Million (P100,000,000) Pesos of this purpose. We assure all those concerned that we, in the province of Bukidnon, fully and strictly adhere to the basic policy of transparency in accordance with the tenets of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. We also assure everyone that our budget allocation for our medicine requirements is very competitive because our procurement process is "commission-free". We repeat, and we would like to stress that we do not allow, much less, accept "commission" or "bribe money" from any supplier or contractor, hence, there is no reason for all of you to jack your prices as part of your add-on costs.

We prefer BFAD approved generic Drugs and medicines, and we encourage manufacturers, importers and sole distributors who can offer the most advantageous prices to the PGB to participate in our bulk procurement scheme.

So for those interested to join in our procurement needs for medicines kindly get in touch with our BAC Secretariat at 088-211-2537, 088-221-4820.

(Sgd.) **Jose Ma. R. Zubiri, Jr.**
Provincial Governor

(PDI-Feb. 1 & 8, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar Street, Zamboanga City

SECTION I. INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Zamboanga City Water District, through its Bids and Awards Committee I (BAC I), invites Suppliers/Manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

LOT No.	PR No.	Brief Description	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Cost of of Bid Documents	Date of Issuance of Bid Documents	Date of Pre-Bid Conference	Date of Submission/ Opening of Bids
1	9495	RICE-BEST QUALITY (FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2007)	P 612,000.00	P 600.00	February 1 to 7, 2007	February 8, 2007	February 20, 2007
2	9481	INKS & CARTRIDGES FOR 1ST QUARTERLY STOCK	170,000.00	235.00	February 1 to 7, 2007	February 8, 2007	February 20, 2007
3	9484	BRASS FITTINGS FOR NEW TAPPING & STOCK REPLENISHMENT	1,113,200.00	1,000.00	February 1 to 7, 2007	February 8, 2007	February 20, 2007
4	9279	WATER METER ½"Ø FOR STOCK REPLENISHMENT	180,000.00	250.00	February 5 to 9, 2007	February 13, 2007	February 27, 2007
5	9483 & 9480	PE, HDPE & PVC PIPES & FITTINGS FOR REPLACEMENT OF STOCKS USED FOR THE INSTALLATION OF FEEDERLINE AT IPIL-IPIL DRIVE CALARIAN & FOR STOCK REPLENISHMENT	840,000.00	800.00	February 5 to 9, 2007	February 13, 2007	February 27, 2007

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules & Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process of the Eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its reponsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT and inspect the Bidding documents at the address given below during office hours (8:00–5:00 p.m.).

All Bids must be accompanied by a ***Bid Security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's and Manager's Check in the amount of One Percent (1%) of the Approved Budget Cost.*** Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid Opening shall be on the 2nd Floor, ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT Main Office Building, Pilar St., Zamboanga City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Mr. Noel M. Kawaguchi
Pilar St., Zamboanga City 7000
Telephone No. (062) 991 1556
Email:
Fax: (062) 991-2799

(Sgd.) ARNULFO A. ALFONSO
BAC I Chairman

(PDI – February 1, 2007)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1200 Taguig City, Philippines
PO Box 2102 MCPO Tel Nos 893-6001 to 47/893-1320 Fax No. 840-1575

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PNOC Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

SECURITY SERVICES FOR FORT BONIFACIO, BAESA WAREHOUSE AND ERDD, DILIMAN
EDC07-030

The Approved Project Cost is P25,326,000.00 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 2 years.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o B.F. Salvador) starting **February 1, 2007** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: One Thousand (P1,000.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **February 9, 2007, 10:00 a.m.** at the BAC Pre-bid Room, Bldg. V, First Floor, PNOC-EDC Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila. Site inspection will follow thereafter.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor, Building 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on February 21, 2007** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI--Feb. 1, 2007)

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Sealed applications for eligibility and bid documents for the supply and delivery of (a) Appointment and Oath of BEI (Commission on Elections Form Nos. 5 & 5A) and (b) Paper Seal for Book of Voters (CEF No. 12A) for use in the May 14, 2007 elections shall be received at the Comelec Session Hall, 8th floor, Palacio del Gobernador, Intramuros, Manila, at 2:00 p.m. on February 12, 2007 and February 19, 2007, respectively, at which place, date and time, said applications and sealed bids shall be opened in the presence of the members of the BAC, representatives of the Commission on Elections, Commission on Audit, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, the participating bidders and the public, with an approved budget of one million four hundred ninety-three thousand two hundred fifty pesos (Php1,493,250.00), charged against the appropriation of the Preparatory National and Local Elections 2007.

A pre-bid conference shall be held on February 6, 2007, 10:00 A.M. at the Comelec Session Hall, 8th floor, Palacio del Gobernador, Intramuros, Manila.

Bid documents and specifications may be obtained during regular office hours, beginning February 2, 2007, from the Property Division upon payment at the Cash Division, Commission on Elections of a non-refundable amount of one thousand pesos (Php 1,000.00).

Bids shall be accompanied by a Bid Security equivalent to one per centum (1%) of the offer, bid, tender or quotation, in the form of cash or Manager's/Cashier's check payable to the "Commission on Elections".

Deadline for submission to the BAC of the application for eligibility and bid envelopes shall be on February 12, 2007 for CEF No. 5 & 5A, and February 19, 2007 for CEF 12A, at 2:00 P.M., at the Comelec Session Hall.

Delivery schedule shall be on February 19, 2007 for CEF No. 5 & 5A; 50% on or before March 5, 2007; and 50% on or before March 12, 2007 for CEF No. 12A.

COMELEC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formal defect contained therein, and accept the lowest complying responsive bid that is most advantageous to the Commission. Likewise, it reserves the right to review the qualifications of the bidders after the bidding and before the contract is executed. Should such review uncover any change in the situation of the bidder to materially downgrade the substance of such statements, the COMELEC shall disqualify the bidder upon due notice without any obligation whatsoever on the part of the COMELEC for any expense or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of its bid.

January 30, 2007.

JOSE M. TOLENTINO, JR.
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Feb. 1, 2007)

SEPTEMBER STAR, INC.
POEA License : POEA 508-LB-041404-R

MOSEL VITELIC INC.
POEA Reg. No. 10076897
Valid until July 18, 2009

ANNOUNCES ITS URGENT JOB OPENINGS FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS:

1. PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS- NT$ 60,000 monthly

Male or FEMALE / 25 years old & above/ minimum 6 years working experience in solar cell characterization, fabrication and efficiency improvement, cell design technology development.

2. MANAGERS-NT$ 100,000.00 monthly

MALE or FEMALE / 30 years old & above/ Minimum 10 years working experience & with strong command of responsibility.

3. DIRECTORS- not less than NT$ 160,000.00 monthly

MALE or FEMALE/ 35 years old & above/ Minimum 10 years working experience in a reputable Solar Cell manufacturing companies.

Applicants of the above mentioned categories should have Master Degree and Graduate of Electrical & Electronics Communications Engineering , Computer Science or related courses in Physics, Material Science & Engineering.

SEE US AND APPLY AT :
Main Office: 1861 Einstein St.,
Brgy. San Isidro, Makati City
Tel. Nos. 887-5633 / 842-5771

Branch Office: 2nd Flr. EG Bldg., Poblacion ,
Urdaneta City, Pangasinan
Tel. No. 075-5684824

" FOR MANPOWER POOLING ONLY / NO FEES TO BE COLLECTED"
"BEWARE OF ILLEGAL RECRUITERS"

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INQUIRER SM MEGAMALL BRANCH
635-0219 • 637-2008

OBITUARIES

In Memoriam

On the
NINTH DEATH ANNIVERSARY
of

CORAZON R. CUI

On the 1st of February 2007, her 9th death anniversary, Masses and prayers will be offered at St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Richmond, BC, Canada; St. Paul's Parish, Richmond, BC, Canada; St. James the Great Parish, Ayala Alabang; Mary Mother of Good Counsel Church, Marcelo Green Village.

We are very grateful to all who keep our beloved **CORITO** in their memory and who continue to pray for her.

Mackie, Gabby, Rosabel, Carla, Mako;
grandson Zacky;
and granddaughter Cara Corazon.

Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Don Carlos, Bukidnon
-o0o-

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section of R.A. Act No. 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that **LEVI HIDALGO PADILLA** has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from **LAURENCE LEVI** to **LEVI** in the birth certificate of **LAURENCE LEVI HIDALGO PADILLA** who was born on **September 11, 1949** at **Burgos St., Isabela, Negros Occidental** and whose parents are **Andres M. Padilla** and **Haydee B. Hidalgo**.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his/her written opposition with this Office not later than **February 23, 2007**.

(Sgd.) MELISA R. CAVALIDA
Municipal Civil Registrar

(PDI - Feb. 1 & 8, 2007)

NATIONAL
CLASSIFIEDS
The Widest Read Classifieds

More Classified Ads:
Supreme Court A6
Land Registration
Authority A21
Philippine Reclamation
Authority A25
DOLE-NCR A25

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
Tel. Nos. : 712-3001 • 749-3806 to 11

NAME OF DECEASED	PLACE OF VIEWING	INTERMENT/CREMATION DATE & TIME	INTERMENT/CREMATION PLACE
DR. RUDY S. REGALADO	Chapel A Quezon City	Feb. 3, 2007 after the 8:00 am Mass	Loyola Memorial Park Marikina City
GREGORIA LOPEZ	Chapel-G Quezon City	Feb. 3, 2007	Manila Memorial Park Bulacan

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 31, 2007)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.1	7.1	7	7	25,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	49.5	50.5	49.5	50.5	1,373,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	71.5	72	71	72	3,708,200
China Banking Corp.	680	700	680	700	63,300
Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.5	0.5	0.49	0.5	1,540,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc	88	90.5	88	90	275,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	58.5	59	58	59	3,383,000
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	50	50	50	50	4,600
Philippine National Bank	48	48.5	48	48	7,300
Phil. Savings Bank	49.5	50	49.5	50	22,700
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	38	39.5	38	39.5	378,800
Security Bank Corp.	74	77	74	77	202,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	60	60.5	60	60	67,500
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
ATR Kimeng Fin. Corp.	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.5	58,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.8	4.85	4.8	4.85	219,000
First Abacus Financial	0.57	0.8	0.57	0.8	30,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	32	32	32	32	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1625	1625	1625	1625	940
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.58	1.6	1.58	1.58	337,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	430	450	430	445	4,950
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2050	2050	2050	2050	1,180
Ivantage Corp.	1.62	1.62	1.6	1.6	2,636,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
PNOC Energy Dev. Corp.	4.85	4.95	4.75	4.85	47,444,000
First Gen Corp.	56	56.5	55.5	55.5	481,300
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	73.5	76	73	75.5	1,037,200
Manila Electric Co. A	70	70.5	69.5	70.5	166,900
Manila Electric Co. B	70	71.5	69.5	71	1,136,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.1	9.2	9.1	9.1	4,408,000
Petron Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.25	4.25	13,068,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	300,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	364,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.02	2.02	5,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	90,000
Jollibee Foods Corp	42.5	43	42	42.5	1,330,600
RFM Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.32	1.34	126,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	99,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	310,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63	63.5	62.5	63.5	85,600
San Miguel Corp. B	74.5	75	74.5	75	409,900
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.06	2.06	2.04	2.04	791,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19	18.5	19	4,954,900
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.3	1.3	1.26	1.28	10,017,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	4.35	4.45	4.35	4.45	3,111,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	3.3	3.6	3.3	3.6	371,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.1	8.1	8	8.1	1,526,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	24,000
Republic Cement Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.1	5.1	131,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.1	5.1	4.9	5	1,601,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.8	0.8	21,030,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	25,710,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0095	0.0095	0.009	0.009	42,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	9,000,000
Ayala Corp.	625	630	615	630	427,100
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.7	0.71	0.7	0.71	570,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	8.3	8.6	8.1	8.2	30,364,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	9.5	9.5	9	9	2,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.075	0.0775	222,100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.05	3.05	1,050,000
APC Group Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	2,590,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.012	402,600,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.22	1.26	3,640,000
PAL Holdings Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.65	3.7	244,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10	10	10	40,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.05	3.1	3.05	3.1	18,148,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.1	7.2	925,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	5.1	5.4	5	5.4	12,348,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	1	1	1	1	30,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.31	310,000
House of Investments Inc.	2.9	3.15	2.9	3.05	1,275,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	12.5	12.5	12	12.25	885,400
Keppel Holdings	2	2	2	2	21,000
Keppel Holdings B	2.04	2.3	1.94	1.94	551,000
Medco Holdings	0.38	0.38	0.35	0.36	6,630,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	10,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	5.1	5.1	4.95	5	960,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	2.02	2.02	2	2	539,000
Pacifica	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	51,200,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	20,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	10,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	480,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	1,730,000
SM Investments Corp.	372.5	375	367.5	370	759,230
South China Resources Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	270,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	2,000
Uniol Res. & Holdings Co	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	6,600,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	390,000
Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	16.5	17.5	16.5	17.5	16,739,900
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.45	0.5	0.45	0.47	1,420,000
Belle Corp.	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.2	2,111,000
A. Brown Co. Inc.	1.98	2.16	1.94	2.04	11,869,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.47	0.49	0.47	0.47	3,860,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.35	3.4	1,667,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.88	1.9	291,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	3,000,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	140,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.71	0.72	0.7	0.71	7,120,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.66	1.64	1.66	50,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	0.0625	5,000,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.195	0.195	240,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	64,000
Interport Res.	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	24,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	21,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	18,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.52	1,490,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.78	0.78	3,460,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	1,600,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	700,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.6	2.65	2.6	2.65	52,041,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.65	4.7	163,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.04	2.1	2.04	2.04	60,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	16	16.25	15.75	16.25	1,696,900
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.66	0.67	0.65	0.65	7,620,000
SM Development Corp.	3.35	3.55	3.35	3.45	5,826,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.75	9,947,900
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.58	0.58	500,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	22	22.5	22	22	163,800
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.9	1.92	11,498,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1320	1440	1320	1440	99,180
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.6	6,827,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2645	2655	2625	2630	153,210
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.31	0.33	24,960,000
Diversified Fin. Network	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	13,000
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	21,000,000
Ionics Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.85	1,611,000
Ipvg Corp.	4	4.05	3.9	3.9	720,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	10,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.06	0.0575	0.0575	3,700,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	100,000
Transpacific Broadband	2.4	2.42	2.34	2.34	533,000
Philweb Corp.	0.035	0.036	0.035	0.036	106,800,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	24	24.25	23.75	24	581,700
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.2	1.28	1.2	1.28	17,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.02	2.02	1.98	2	1,365,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	5,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	1,220,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.6	0.65	0.6	0.61	2,240,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	5,000
Ipeople Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	53,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.06	2.06	2.04	2.06	92,000
Paxys Inc.	23.5	24	23.5	24	508,100
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.5	1.54	1.48	1.54	87,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5.2	5.3	5.1	5.3	409,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	5.2	5.4	5.2	5.4	347,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	62,200,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	390,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.5	11.75	9.5	10.75	803,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	18,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	22,380,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	4,290,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	407,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.029	0.027	0.028	305,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	85,400,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.85	3.9	3.85	3.9	3,904,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	19	19.25	17.5	18	418,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	1,610,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.54	1.56	1.52	1.52	3,319,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	10,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	142,300,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	90,000,000
The Philodrill Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	143,400,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	291,600

Vehicle ...

From page B1

sedans—five-seaters—for use as regular taxi cabs. There is a separate rule for "mega-taxis" that cover Asian Utility Vehicles that seat at least 10 people.

The Avanza seats seven, including two seats on the third row that would be removed to meet the five-seat rule for regular taxis.

Company officials said 922 Avanza units have been sold within two months since its launch last November. Two out of five units sold were of the 1.3-liter variant, which is the one recommended for taxi operation.

Officials said there was currently a two-month long "wait list" for deliveries, representing between 400 and 500 orders. Avanza units come from Toyota's Indonesia assembly plants.

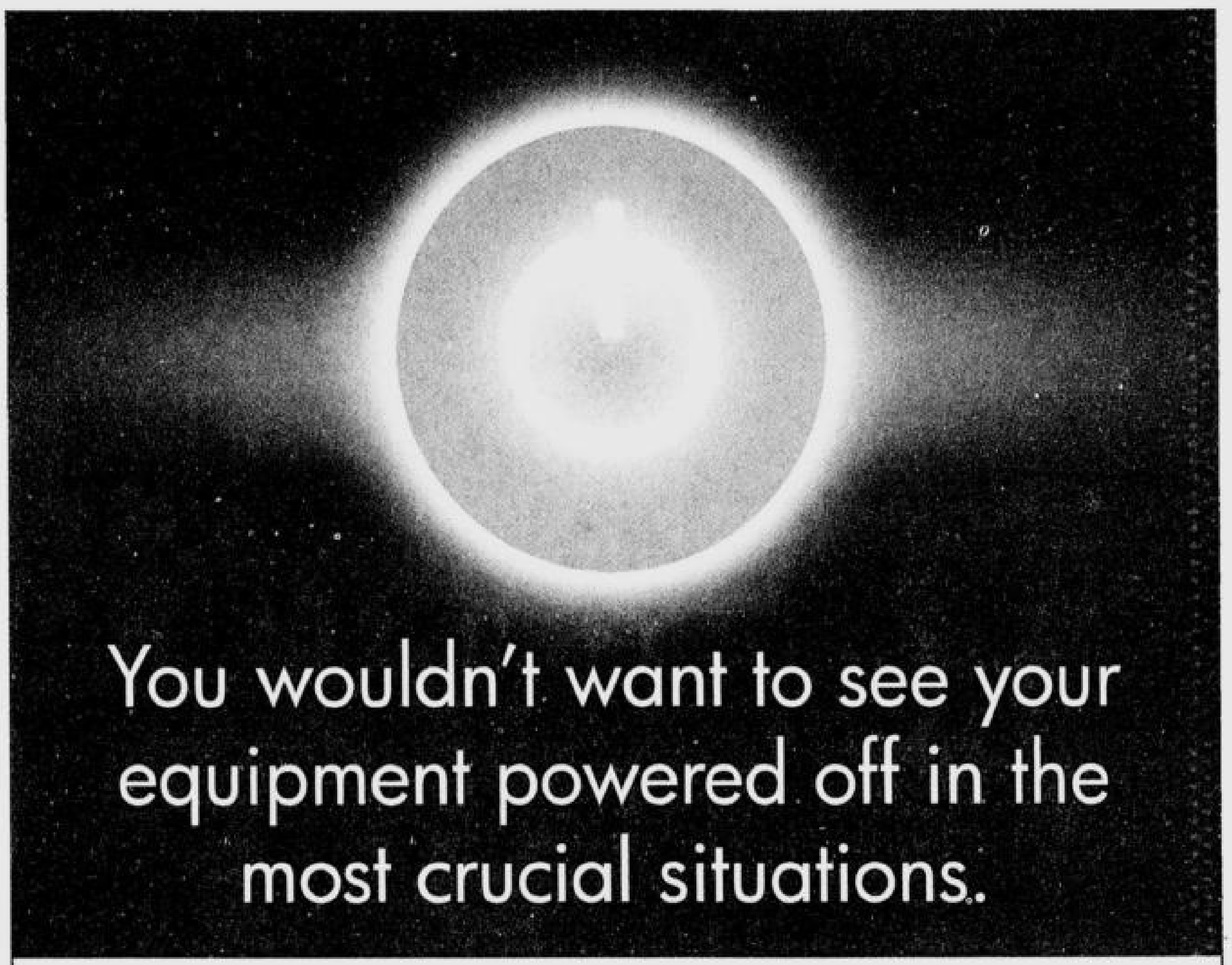
CURRENCIES

January 31, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.771248	1.000000	49.0270
Japan	Yen	0.006343	0.008224	0.4032
United Kingdom	Pound	1.513805	1.962800	96.2302
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098755	0.128046	6.2777
Switzerland	Franc	0.616062	0.798786	39.1621
Canada	Dollar	0.653489	0.847314	41.5413
Singapore	Dollar	0.501820	0.650660	31.8999
Australia	Dollar	0.595420	0.772022	37.8499
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.045750	2.652520	130.0451
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.205644	0.266638	13.0725
Brunei	Dollar	0.500193	0.648550	31.7965
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000110	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.022518	0.029197	1.4314
UAE	Dirham	0.210001	0.272287	13.3494
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.296600	63.5684
Korea	Won	0.000818	0.001061	0.0520
China	Yuan**	0.099196	0.128617	6.3057
ArgentinaPeso	0.248389	0.322061	15.7897	
Brazil	Real	0.361918	0.469263	23.0066
Denmark	Kroner	0.134162	0.173955	8.5285
India	Rupee	0.017513	0.022707	1.1133
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220275	0.285608	14.0025
Mexico	New Peso	0.069857	0.090576	4.4407
New Zealand	Dollar	0.530760	0.688184	33.7396
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012723	0.016496	0.8087
South Africa	Rand	0.105781	0.137155	6.7243
Sweden	Kroner	0.110586	0.143386	7.0298
Syria	Pound	0.014857	0.019264	0.9445
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023393	0.030332	1.4871

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY Time—Jan. 30, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.

** Asian time closing rate as of Jan. 30, 2007


You wouldn't want to see your equipment powered off in the most crucial situations.

Enjoy greater value with HP Care Pack

HP Care Pack services extend and uplift the existing warranty of your HP products, keeping your business up and running. Backed by HP's team of support professionals, you get outstanding service quality and peace of mind so you can focus on your business.

HP Care Pack
For your total peace of mind

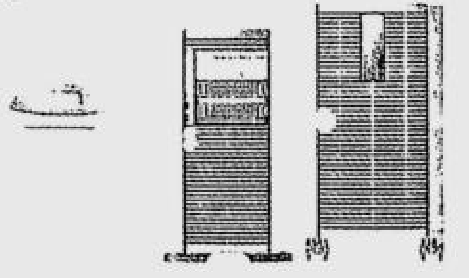
HP Care Pack services:

3 year, Return-to-HP	- Return to HP Customer Service Center - Turnaround time: within 3 business days
3 year, Next Day Onsite, 9x5	- Onsite repair service, 5 days a week, 9 hours a day - Response time: next business day - Monday - Friday, excluding public holidays, 8am to 5pm
3 year, 4-hour Response, 9x5	- Onsite repair service, 5 days a week, 9 hours a day - Response time: within 4 hours* - Monday - Friday, excluding public holidays, 8am to 5pm
3 year, 4-hour Response, 24x7	- Onsite repair service, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day - Response time: within 4 hours* - Monday - Sunday, including public holidays
3 year, Call-to-Repair	- HP is committed to restoration of hardware within a maximum 6 hours, from the time the call is received by HP Customer Care Center to the time the hardware is operational.**

* From the time that the call is logged in to HP Customer Care Center.

** NOS Restoration is not included in the 6-hour hardware repair commitment window. However, HP makes the effort to restore the NOS as quickly as possible.

The service coverage includes: all labour, parts and materials needed for the repair, replacement of all failed components with genuine HP parts.



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STATEMENT OF CONDITION

(Head Office and Branches)
As of December 29, 2006

ASSETS		AMOUNT
Cash and Cash Items	P	649,221
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		1,593,866
Due from Other Banks		31,833,982
Held to Maturity Financial Investments (Net)		27,636,553
Receivables from Customers (Net)		6,513,483
Bank Premises, Furnitures, Fixtures, & Equipments (Net)		1,424,773
Other Assets (Net):		
Others		872,434
TOTAL ASSETS	P	70,524,312
LIABILITIES		
Savings Deposits		1,089,427
Time Deposits		1,001,866
Unearned Income and Other Deferred Credits		324,529
Other Liabilities		1,268,947
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	3,684,769
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	50,000,000
Surplus		16,729,953
Undivided Profits		109,590
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	66,839,543
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	70,524,312

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jaime C. Gonzalez
Chairman/Director

Alfredo M. Yao
Director

PRINCIPAL OFFICER

Gerardo V. Munda
President

Melvin B. Cañedo
Treasurer

Other Information:

1. Deposits of:		
a. Banks		1,156,104
2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law:		
Prescribed		
Ratio of Compliance	6% for Small Enterprises	2% for Medium Ent.
Actual Compliance	6.73%	2.44%
3. Amount of non-performing loans		548,221
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio		3.96%
5. General provision for loan losses		62,199
6. Specific provision for loan losses		7,266,892
7. Return on equity (ROE)		0.16%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

I / WE, *Melvin B. Cañedo* and *Gerardo V. Munda* of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) MELVIN B. CAÑEDO
Treasurer

(Sgd.) GERARDO V. MUNDA
President

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 23rd day of January, 2007, affiant exhibiting to me his/her/their Community Tax No.00703747 issued at Cebu on January 04, 2007 and Community Tax No.01578315 issued at Manila on January 05, 2007.

Doc. No. 487
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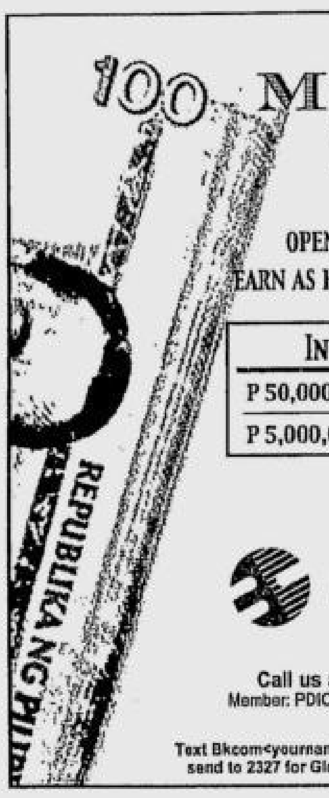
FirstPac gets more time to raise funds for PLDT



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By Daxim L. Lucas

FIRST PACIFIC CO.'S DECISION TO waive its right of first refusal for an indirect 6.4-percent stake in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) may have been made to buy it more time to raise funds.

According to a government official familiar with the deal, the move was "a good one" for the Hong Kong-based conglomerate and its managing director Manuel V. Pangilinan as it gave them one more month to raise the P25.2 billion needed to acquire a 14-percent stake in Philippine Telecommunications Investment Corp. (PTIC).

The official, who declined to be named, described the surprise development as a "valid ploy" on the part of First Pacific, which he said was "expected."

In a separate interview, Finance Sec. Margarito B. Teves said the so-called right of first refusal would now go to PTIC, which is also 56-percent owned by First Pacific.

The move effectively becomes the second deadline extension for First Pacific and Pangilinan, who vowed to buy the PLDT stake with or without the support of Japanese partner NTT DoCoMo.

"The Philippine government and First Pacific had planned to sign a share purchase agreement for the PTIC shares (yesterday) but the First Pacific Group advised the government that PTIC itself would exercise its right to match," Teves said in his statement.

The contested shares are the government's holding in PTIC, which were sequestered after the downfall of former President Marcos in 1986. PTIC, in turn, holds a stake in PLDT.

First Pacific's right to match expires today. The government will notify PTIC of its right to match on Feb. 2 and it will have 30 days to exercise this right.

Teves and the privatization council under his office have been trying to privatize the shares since late last year to raise more money for the government. He said the government remains committed to selling the PTIC shares.

VAT collection hits ₱77B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT generated P76.88 billion in revenue last year from the implementation of the value-added tax reform law, which helped keep the budget deficit below the ceiling.

The amount was P1.1 billion higher than the P75.76-billion target set for 2006.

The VAT reform law, which was criticized for being anti-poor, raised the tax rate from 10 to 12 percent and expanded its coverage to include previously exempted services and products, including oil and electricity.

Of the total VAT collection last year, P21.63 billion came from the Bureau of Internal Revenue, while P55.25 billion was turned in by the Bureau of Customs.

The BIR's VAT collection surpassed by P1.84 billion its target of P19.79 billion, while Customs' collection was P1.05 billion short of its goal of P56.3 billion.

Finance Secretary Gil Beltran said VAT had helped the BIR detect underdeclaration of income by some corporate taxpayers. Data from the Department of Finance placed the government's gross collection of VAT at P107.921 billion. The net of P76.88 billion was arrived at after deducting the costs arising from measures aimed at mitigating the impact of the VAT reforms on consumers.

In a report, the DOF said measures such as the reduction of the excise tax on petroleum and the repeal of the franchise tax on power distribution cost the government P31 billion in foregone revenue.

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WHAT'S INSIDE
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Treasures of Spain

Arzak's efforts helped make his country one of the main destinations in Europe for fine cuisine

MADRID WAS THE VENUE for yet another international summit on gastronomy. Now on its fifth year, Madrid Fusion just seems to get more impressive every year with its roster of culinary gems. How fortunate I was to experience it all this year!

Spain was represented by her homegrown best, the likes of Juan Maria Arzak who, after meeting Paul Bocuse, made it his personal crusade to revolutionize Spanish cuisine, using his world-renowned restaurant Arzak as his staging area.

Arzak's efforts paved the way for the younger set of Spanish chefs, thus earning for Spain the glory of being one of the main destinations in Europe for fine cuisine.

Among world's best

No gastronomical event would ever be complete without the Catalan-born Ferran Adrià, the famed head chef of the 3-Michelin star El Bulli Restaurant in Costa Brava. He is considered one of the best chefs in the world while El Bulli topped the European restaurant ranking and was hailed as the second best restaurant in the Western world.

So coveted is a dinner place at El Bulli that, as of last year, reservations were already being made for 2008. Dining with Adrià is not just a delight for the palate but rather a fairy tale of a dining experience.

Dinner at the restaurant involves 25-30 little dishes that range from a welcome cocktail that includes crisps of fish skin, thin shreds of pizza dough, pine nuts and caramelized beetroot to raviolis of oysters with oyster jelly, and seaweed tea foam, examples of his whimsical cuisine.

He is known for many pop creations but especially for his *spumas* (foam), flavored cream, at times with egg, and puffed off from nitrogen cartridge-powered canisters used to whip cream.

Adrià's culinary methods have won him the title "molecular gastronomist," generally one who melds science and culinary methods, experimenting with technology to achieve new flavors and textures. But it is a title Adrià takes offense to, saying it takes away the very essence of his craft, which he takes so seriously.

El Bulli is open six months a year. The other six months the chef is in his lab/kitchen whipping up and experimenting with new ingredients and methods.

Other masters

Among Spain's other culinary greats were Michelin-starred Santi Santa Maria, Paco Roncero, Koldo Rodero, Xabi Gutiérrez, Sergio and Javier Torres, Toño Pérez, Ricardo Sanz, Alberto Chicote, Ricardo Gil, Pepe Solla, Fatéma Hal, Salvador Gallego, Montse Estruch, Nati Mateos, Pedro and Marcos Morán, and Angel Leon.

From overseas came other culinary giants, including Charlie Trotter, Dan Barber, Grant Achatz, Martin Aw Yong, Tetsuya Wakuda, Bin Wang, Seiji Yamamoto, Dong Zhen-Xiang, Davide Oldani and Frédéric Bau.

A stellar cast it was indeed, each one lending his/her unique and personal touch to those who take their food and dining to heart.

But that's not all. Though having all the chefs would have been enough, the exhibitors made the event even more awesome! Everything one thinks of when Spain is mentioned was rightfully represented—*jamon*, *quesos*, *trufas*, wines—name it, it was there for the picking.

Famous

Serrano means "from the mountains." Traditionally, Spanish hams were taken to the cool mountains for curing. Today though, they are mostly cured in controlled environments. The process alone—from raising the hogs to slaughtering (for some, as long as two years) to the actual process of curing (that could last 18 months to three years)—is the most logical justification for its cost.

Jamon Serrano comes mainly from two kinds of hogs, the most prized being from the Iberian hog, accounting for only five percent of the total 39,000 million hams produced in a year. The other type is from the White Hog (Landrace or Duroc strains).

After the hogs are trimmed and cleaned, they are covered with salt. This absorbs the extra moisture and prevents the ham from spoiling (a two-week process). Then the salt is washed off and the ham is hung to dry. This is when the fat is broken down and the curing process begins.

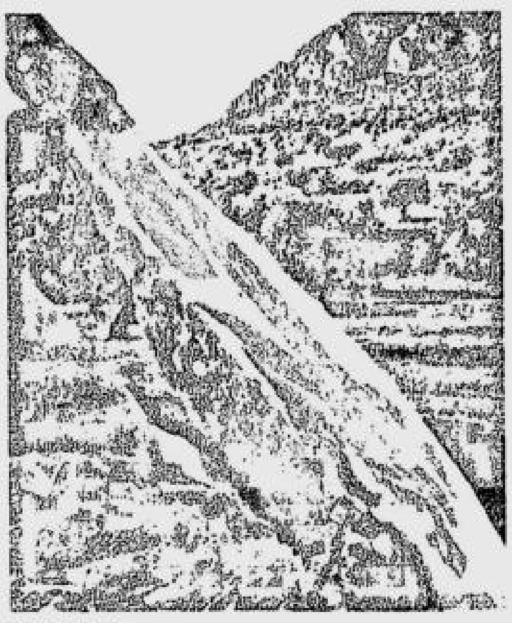
This is also when fungi grow on the *jamon's* exterior giving it its unequalled flavor and aroma. And, much like fine wine, it is marked with a DO (*Denominacion de Origin*), some sort of a control number, a seal of approval or, if you would, a stamp of excellence.

(Next week: More on *jamon*, cheeses, and appreciating good olive oil, wine, truffles.)

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph

THE REVOLUTIONIST Juan Maria Arzak

FERRAN Adrià, tagged as the world's greatest chef though some say it was a title he gave himself



JAMON Serrano

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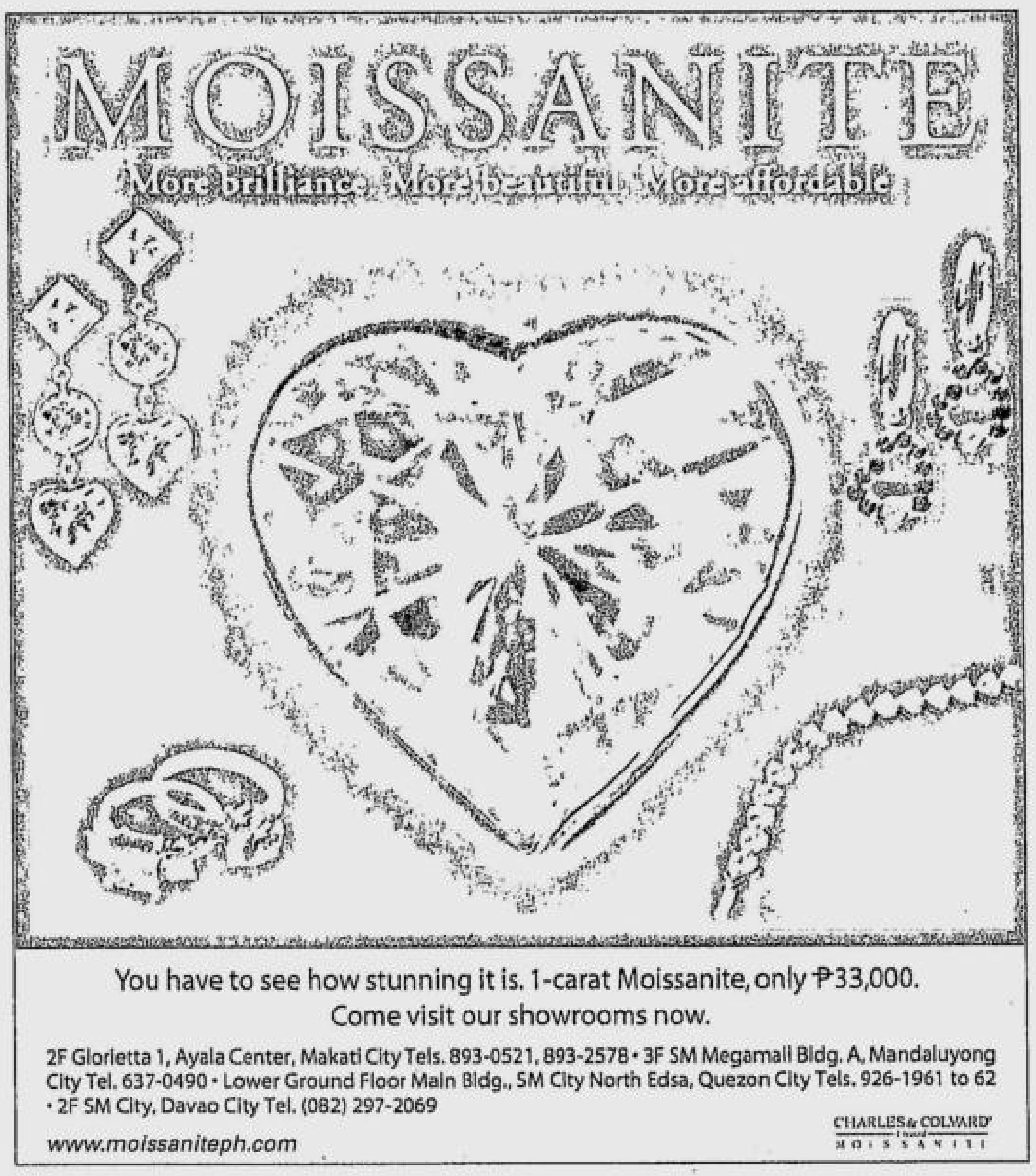

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The pudding icon's lip-licking concoction

By Romel M. Oribe

(Editor's Note: One of six winners in this year's Doreen Gamboa Fernandez Food Writing Awards, this essay was written by a writing fellow of Dumaguete and Iligan. Romel Oribe resides in Surigao del Sur, works at the province's Department of Trade and Industry and teaches public administration at the local state university.)

THE AUTHOR

IN THE '70S WHEN I WAS A KID, SUMmer afternoon naps were obligatory. And unlike my siblings who faked sleep, I dozed off easily, knowing that when I woke up, mother would send me to buy cassava pudding for *merienda*.

With a one-peso bill in hand I would run to this old garage in the corner two blocks away, which the 60-ish Iya Inggin had transformed into a makeshift work station-cum-snack bar.

On one side, close to the wall of wooden sticks, were wrought iron chairs and two enamel tables. On the opposite side was the cooking area where firewood crackled under a vat steamer and a large wok. By the door was a table stacked with layers of pudding individually packed in cellophane and wrapped in Manila paper twisted around the edge in such a way that they looked like French *empanadas*.

It was not a pretty structure; it didn't even have a window and a floor under its nipa roof. But that people trooped to it like ants to sugar was a sweet testament to the sheer magic by which she prepared her concoction like no other.

I liked my pudding fresh from the mould, but only because I liked watching Iya Inggin fish one from a large *palanggana* and trace the shape of the circular mould with the handle of a plastic fork before flipping the pudding into the cellophane, the caramelized side facing up.

Then from a bowl using a golden spoon, she would scoop the *arnibal*—a deep-brown syrupy topping made from the purest coconut milk and brown sugar—and twirl it into a small cellophane with an amazing sleight-of-a-wrinkly-but-dirt-free hand.

At home, before my parents and siblings each holding a fork and a saucer, I would transfer the pudding to a plate, section it with a knife, and pour and spread the *arnibal* on top.

Then to the sound of metal clinking against china, we'd devour it, munching the sweet, soft, sticky mixture, making it linger in our mouths before letting it slide down our throats. For always, it was lip-licking good!

Elaborate process

Pudding-making involves an elaborate process that requires attention to details. The cassava must be fresh and average-sized for the pudding not to taste bitter and grainy. Meticulously peeled, the cassava must be washed five times in running water before it is grated. Pudding makers—if I may digress—now go to commercial electric grinders.

In the '70s when our town had yet no electricity, Iya Inggin grated the cassava on a punctured galvanized sheet, with the Camay girl held at both sides by sticks. And every now and then—or so they said—Iya Inggin would deliberately scrape her hand and let the blood seep into the mixture, both to improve the pudding's taste and to hook forever her customers!

The grated cassava is put inside a *katsa* flour sack and wrung dry. The process is repeated thrice for better pudding texture. In fact Iya Inggin had a contraption made, from under whose fulcrum she placed the grated cassava before she and her housemate (she was a widow) mounted the wooden plank running across it like a see-saw.

The sapped cassava meat is then transferred to a large bowl where it is manually combed for pulps and crumbs. Mixed with other ingredients like sugar, coconut milk and vanilla, the hodgepodge is then poured into an eight-inch, brown sugar-sprinkled mould and steamed. When it turns opaque—the tell-tale sign that it's done—the pudding is placed on a basin that contains just enough water to cool it without soaking.

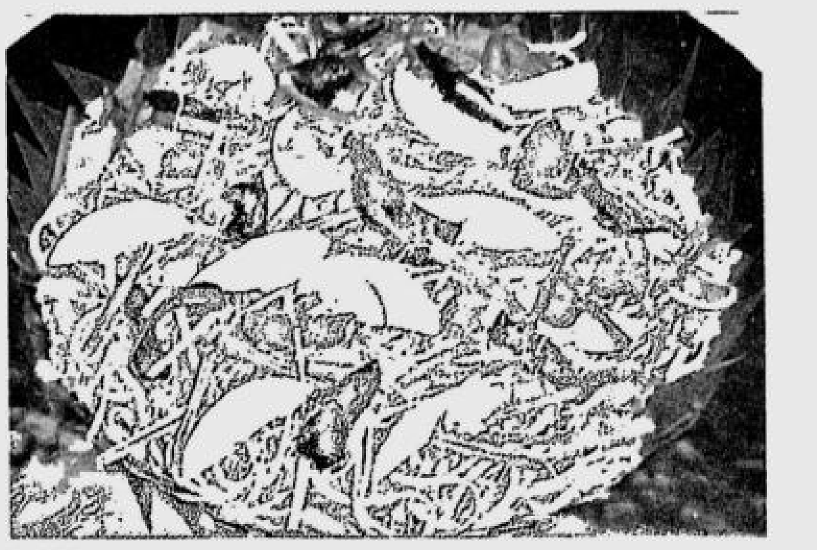
Syrup makes it perfect

Cooking pudding is admittedly elementary; but it's the cooking of the *arnibal* that is tricky: Too thin and it drips and messes up the pudding's presentation; too thick and it can't be spread. A pudding maker told me that the best way to cook *arnibal* is to stir it constantly over low fire until the right consistency is attained; that is, when it doesn't trickle if twirled with a spoon.

It's an immutable fact in our town of Tago in Surigao del Sur that only Iya Inggin could whip up a perfect *arnibal* to go with her perfect pudding. Patrician and a member of Tago's beautiful elite, she reigned supreme, thus earning from me the title "The Pudding Icon!"

There are at present six pudding makers in Tago. But since Iya Inggin's death in 1997 when she brought her recipe and technique to the grave, I haven't eaten something as heavenly!

Pudding addicts continue to troop to Tago like devotees. And they swear that it's best to chill the pudding first before eating it. I agree, but still I like mine fresh from the mould. If only for the sweet memory.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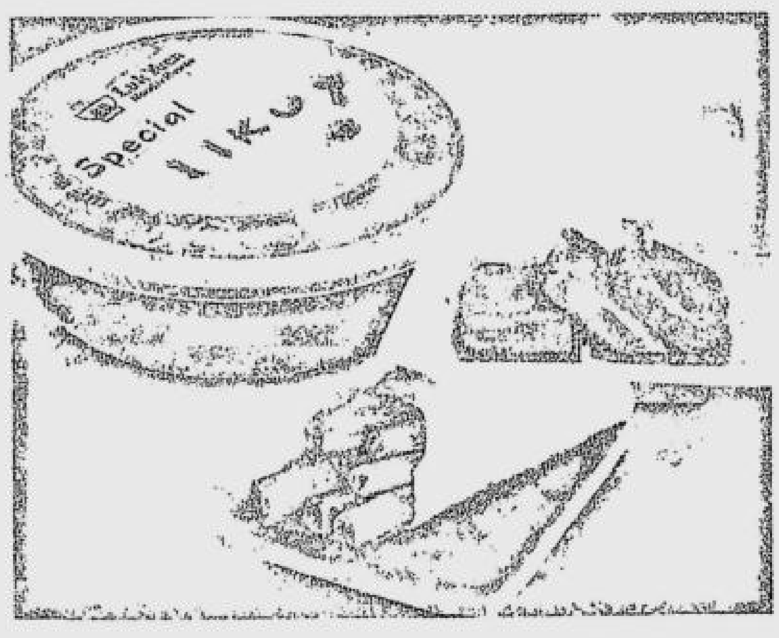


WELCOME the Chinese Year of the Fire Pig with Luk Yuen Noodle House's *tikoy* treats to go or for dining in. A whole round *tikoy* in microwaveable container is available for P158. Now available for diners are *tikoy* squares at P55 each and *tikoy* wraps with coco jam dip at P60 each. Luk Yuen has outlets at Glorietta 2, Ayala Center (8671394); Cash and Carry (8432061), Paseo de Magallanes (8536966), Alabang Town Center (7723028), SM Megamall (6331610), and Greenhills Shopping Center (7212620).

DINING OUT

All about crabs, lobsters and oysters

CLAWDADDY Crabhouse and American Grill (6/L, Shangri-La Mall, Mandaluyong City) offers Red Crab specialties by Raymund Magdaluyo and New Orleans dishes by Murray Hertz. ClawDaddy is all about crabs, lobsters, oysters and ribs. Executive chef Peter Ayson, former sous chef of gourmet breakfast restaurant Orange in Chicago, USA, also prepares barbecued ribs and roasted chicken items plus salads. Call 6365679.

HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL Manila's Café Jeepney offers lunch and dinner buffet for P820+ per person. The restaurant has a selection of mango desserts. A must-try is the signature dessert Crepe Samurai. Other sweets are Mango Tatin, Mango Cheesecake, Mango Leche Flan, Mango Spring Rolls, Mango Panacotta, Mango Créme Bruleè, Mango Fruit Pavlova and Mango Linzer Torte. Lunch buffet is 12 noon-2:30 p.m., dinner buffet is 6:30-10:30 p.m. Call 8159711.

CROWNE PLAZA GALLERIA Manila's Xin Tian Di Chinese Restaurant offers lunch set menus for as low as P300+ per person. Over 12 lunch combinations are available including Chinese specialties like Roast Duck with Sauteed Misua, Barbecue Spareribs with Vegetable Dumplings, assorted Dimsum Platter served with Fookien Fried Rice and Soy Chicken with Yang Chow Fried Rice. All lunch combinations come with a bowl of specialty soup. The unlimited Dimsum Lunch Buffet, with over 40 choices and an ongoing 3+1 promo, is available for only P800+ per person. Call 6337222 or e-mail mnlcp@ichotels-group.com.

HULA-HULA Seafood and Barbecue Restaurant serves Luau Feast for the whole family. It consists of steaks and grilled seafood items. Other popular items are Island Sushi Selections and Island Curry Plates. Hula is at Shangri-La Street Scape, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City (9103218); and Westgate, Filinvest City (7712291/7712289).

CLAWDADDY'S Oysters

CRUSTASIA offers Vietnamese, Thai and Chinese specialties. The Podium branch offers Emperor's Buffet including special crab and seafood dishes. A la carte dishes include King Dao Spareribs, Scallop and Beancurd Hot Pot, Salt and Pepper Jumbo Belly Chops, Pan-fried Catfish with Green Curry Sauce, Vegetables Thai Style, Stir-fried Beef, Thai Papaya Salad and Eggplant Salad Steamed Rolls. Crustasia is at 3/F, The Podium, 18 ADB Ave., Ortigas Center; and Rockwell Power Plant Mall, Makati City. Call 7285463 or 6313857.

Filling in the generation gap

From page C4

ily will buy.

'Pares' origin

I was saving these letters on *pares* until I tried the eating places suggested by readers. But it's been months and I haven't even been near any of the places mentioned.

Yna Aquino was a student at the University of Santo Tomas boarding near España Avenue. She wrote that *pares* was beef stew. It was at the España Original Pares where she and her roommates rushed to for "a quick fix" when they got hungry at night.

She tried *pares* in other places, "one somewhere in La Loma area and another in Dimasalang." She surmised I had not gone to any of those places because they were not the cleanest places for eating.

Well, Yna, I've eaten in even worse places. It's just that I haven't found the time.

Rodolfo de Jesus, on the other hand, believes that *pares* originated from a *turo-turo*-style eatery "at the corner of Mayon and Retiro (now N.S. Amoranto) Streets in La Loma, Quezon City. Its name was Jona's."

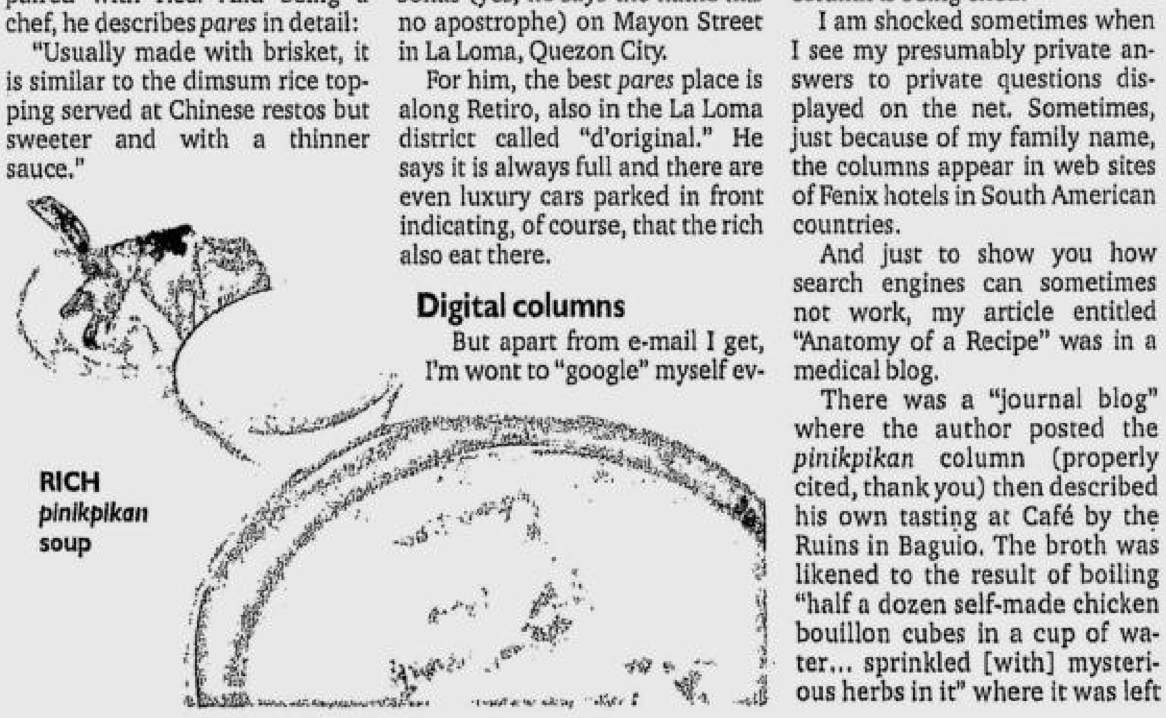
He wrote that it was so popular, somebody would be waiting for you to finish to take your place as you ate. And, because of its success, the owners were able to move Jona's into their own building, constructed from sales of their famous food—a sort of *katas ng pares*.

But Rodolfo said he missed the "hustle and bustle of the old structure" in the bigger place.

Rodolfo defined *pares* as the pairing of Chinese-style beef stew and fried rice. Those who ate at Jona's would ask for an "extra (*dagdag*) spoonful of toasted garlic, an extra bowl of soup or an extra bowl of *lotong*, the liquid of the slowly boiling beef stew."

Chef, food stylist and writer Dino Datu agrees that it is beef stew paired with rice. And being a chef, he describes *pares* in detail:

"Usually made with brisket, it is similar to the dimsum rice topping served at Chinese restos but sweeter and with a thinner sauce."


RICH *pinikpikan* soup

Dino doesn't know the origin of *pares* but he does mention Jonas (yes, he says the name has no apostrophe) on Mayon Street in La Loma, Quezon City.

For him, the best *pares* place is along Retiro, also in the La Loma district called "d'original." He says it is always full and there are even luxury cars parked in front indicating, of course, that the rich also eat there.

Digital columns

But apart from e-mail I get, I'm wont to "google" myself every now and then to find out where the digital version of this column is being cited.

I am shocked sometimes when I see my presumably private answers to private questions displayed on the net. Sometimes, just because of my family name, the columns appear in web sites of Fenix hotels in South American countries.

And just to show you how search engines can sometimes not work, my article entitled "Anatomy of a Recipe" was in a medical blog.

There was a "journal blog" where the author posted the *pinikpikan* column (properly cited, thank you) then described his own tasting at Café by the Ruins in Baguio. The broth was likened to the result of boiling "half a dozen self-made chicken bouillon cubes in a cup of water… sprinkled [with] mysterious herbs in it" where it was left to sit in a dark cave while being prayed over.

That made me smile because while I tried to make the *pinikpikan* less mysterious, the author brought the dish to a rather surreal dimension.

Recipe book donation

Finally, a letter from a Bro. Joel Raymundo, FdCC, who says he is a professed brother of the Canossian Fathers. He asks for some Filipino cookbooks because he is inclined toward the culinary arts and wants to integrate that inclination (cooking, I suppose) with his "secluded life in the seminary."

That request will be a pleasure to fulfill. If any reader or friend also likes to donate, please e-mail me for Brother Joel's address.

E-mail the author at pinoyfood04@yahoo.com

THE CONSUMER

'Mameng's' friends

By Linda B. Bolido

THE ARREST OF CHINESE FISHERMEN caught with a load of Napoleon wrasse on their boat had one positive effect.

People were made aware that the fish, known locally as *mameng*, is endangered. It is a popular restaurant fare, being flavorful and suitable for a number of fish dishes.

Just recently, Raphael Soon, president of North Park, said the restaurant chain would no longer serve *mameng*.

This was prompted by their realization that the fish was "a protected species throughout the Asia-Pacific region."

Similarly, Portico 1771 in Serendra, Bonifacio Global City announced it immediately stopped serving *mameng* upon learning that it was an endangered species and took it off its menu.

In its official statement, the restaurant said: "As a member of the Chateau 1771 Group of Restaurants that includes such reputable fine dining addresses as Chateau 1771 in El Pueblo Ortigas, Sentro 1771 in Greenbelt 3 and Sidebar, El Pueblo Ortigas, Portico 1771 takes pride in its dedication to help preserve the environment by consciously prohibiting the sale of protected and endangered species of plants and animals."

The management said it was unaware of the fish's endangered status. It added that the Chateau group had taken steps to ensure that such an oversight was not repeated.

Feedback

Reader Albert Laborte points out that the ban on smoking in public is not just an ordinance "but a law of the republic."

He adds: "In your article (Jan. 25), you seem to have forgotten that violators of this 'law' includes malls."

He says he has been trying to call the attention of the Quezon City government, the Metro Manila Development Authority and various malls about this problem. He says areas where smoking is allowed are not built to ensure completely that the smoke is contained within those rooms.

Non-smokers still get to inhale the smoke coming from those smoking rooms.

He also raises concern about clinics and medical facilities in malls. He says mall goers are at risk if people with communicable diseases are brought to these facilities.

Also on smoking, anti-smoking campaigners should be vigilant. The television show "NBC Investigates" in the United States recently reported that cigarette companies were behind supposedly citizen initiatives in places where American non-smokers were pushing for local legislation to curtail smoking.

The campaigns were couched in such "safe" words as Non-Smoker Protection or "smoke-less" drives. Campaigners would not admit they were being funded by cigarette companies but NBC's investigation discovered otherwise.

Launching the pro-cigarette company campaigns packaged in safe words simultaneously with legitimate no-smoking initiatives were confusing people who had to vote on those issues.

Meter man

He may not be as lovely as Rita, the meter maid in the Beatles' song, but the Manila Electric Company says their clients should be happy about his presence.

The new, improved Meralco meter man "has undergone intensive training and seminars to make sure he reports an accurate assessment of your meter."

The meter reader has been equipped with proper tools to help him make accurate readings.

If you want to know how the meter reader does his computation of electricity consumption, visit the Meralco website, www.meralco.com.ph, to learn the step-by-step procedure. The website also offers tips on how you can reduce electric consumption.

By the way, your meter man is expected to be "polite, honest and courteous." If he isn't let Meralco know.

Tip

Joey Green, in his book "Gardening Magic," offers this suggestion to keep garbage cans clean:

"Disinfect garbage cans by washing them with a solution made from three-quarters cup Chlorox Bleach to one gallon water. Let stand for five minutes, then rinse clean."

Spanish wine & cheese courses at Instituto Cervantes

INSTITUTO CERVANTES, THE SPANISH Cultural Center, will present Mastering Spanish Wine, 10 a.m.-12 noon, every Saturday, Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24 and March 3.

Conducted by Sherwin A. Lao, a leading wine consultant, the five-session course will guide participants into the rich world of Spanish wine.

The course will be divided into three parts. The first part will be a wine sensory workshop, with aroma exercises and wine tasting. Diverse vintages will be rated.

The second part will focus on Spanish wine laws, including the regional denomination system or DO (*denominación de origen*), the wine-aging law and grape varietals. A primer on wine basics, especially the core differences between Old World and New World wines, will precede the main introduction to Spanish wines.

The third part will focus on Spanish wine regions. Lectures will expound on the DO system, as it applies to key regions. Each session will include wine tasting. Fee is P2,000 per participant.

The Introduction to Spanish Cuisine is a three-session program devoted to gastronomy that will be held 10 a.m.-12 noon, March 17, 24 and 31.

On March 17 and 24, Juan Carlos de Terry will provide participants with an introduction to Spanish cheese from various regions of Spain. He will explain the different characteristics of each variety and will offer a taste of the types of cheese he sells in his store.

On March 31, chef Reggie Aspiras will cook typical Spanish dishes and lecture on different ingredients used in Spanish cuisine (olive oil, capers, *chorizo*, assorted nuts, among others).

Fee for Introduction to Spanish Cuisine is P2,000. Participants can avail of a package price for both courses of P3,500.

Mastering Spanish Wine and Cheese is organized by Instituto Cervantes, the Spanish Commercial Office and Cámara Española de Comercio de Filipinas, in collaboration with Casino Español de Manila. Call 5261482 to 85

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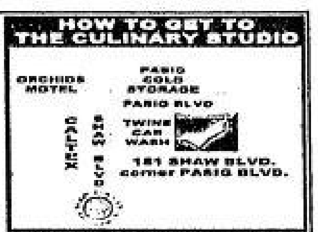

Sylvia Reynoso-Gala
Gold Medalist, Academia de Gastronomos, Madrid, Spain -- 1964
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied in 6 Cooking Schools in Hongkong

Morella Reynoso Gala
Valedictorian, I.H.M.E.S. International Hotel School, United Kingdom – 1992
Studied Cooking at Le Cordon Bleu, London
✓ ALSO TEACHES AT # 25 GLADIOLA ST. UPPER Q.M., BAGUIO CITY TEL. # (074) 444-8844

Ernest Reynoso Gala
Graduate : Italian Institute for Advanced Culinary & Pastry Arts under Chef Director John Nocita, Soverato, Calabria, Italy
Graduate : Le Moulin de Mougins Alain Llorca, Cannes, France
Graduate : Ecole Ritz Escoffier, Paris Ritz Hotel, France
Graduate : Ecole Lenotre Pattisserie, Plaisir Cedex, France
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied at Chopstick and Hongkong Town Gas Culinary Schools

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BARQUILLOS maker at Panaderia de Molo

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

Filling in the generation gap

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE THIS column did a bit of spring cleaning. That means printing comments from readers, correcting certain data and responding to requests.

I answer e-mail as soon as I get them unless it requires some research.

Missing generation

The first one I must correct is the number of granddaughters of Luisa Sanson. That was in my last column about Panaderia de Molo and La Moderna Panaderia.

Bicbic Padilla wrote that there were more than the two granddaughters mentioned and she enumerated some of them from the many children of Luisa. Kristine Gaona Treñas gave a more exact number—15 granddaughters, five of them incorporators of the "Las Nietas."

To Bicbic and the rest of the granddaughters and children of Luisa Sanson excluded by me, my apologies. It serves as a reminder to never presume. I thought I was being quite the meticulous researcher when I e-mailed and called my sources in Iloilo several times about the number of generations that had managed the *panaderia*.

I was computing the years and realized there was a missing generation. I was able to sort that out but got the present generation wrong.

Cheese ball watch list

Because I lamented that many times the *queso de bola* in the market was soft, indicating young cheese instead of the mature ones we were used to, Jojo Agbulos wrote how, when he was still in charge of importing the Pato brand, his company made sure that their cheese had aged.

"Our practice was to order the cheese balls in February, when it was manufactured and placed in storage to age, mature and dry up a little. [They were] shipped to the Philippines mid-September and arrived [in refrigerated vans] usually in less than 21 days or three weeks (and usually released same day by the Customs people because of the nature of the importation—refrigerated thus perishable)."

Jojo is no longer importing Pato and now has "another business." It might interest him to know that in my family, we have a *queso de bola* watch list. If someone says this brand in such and such a supermarket is good, you can bet that that's where the fam-

FILLING / C2

The Maya Kitchen
CULINARY ARTS CENTER

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Pasta Workshop couldn't be more fun. And what's better than eating your own handmade pasta and sauces? Maya Kitchen will teach you to prepare an astonishing array of pasta dish that can serve as an introductory course to meal, or as a light lunch or buffet on their own. This class will also teach you techniques of plating presentation. Come and get the taste of Ital'ian Fuse the way it was meant to be. Check the schedule below and enroll now!

Ital'ian Pasta Workshop: Feb. 3 (Sat.) 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Scallops with tomato creamy wine sauce, Cheesy tomato shrimp paste, Baked Chicken Penne Pasta with Mozzarella Cheese, Traditional Meatballs Spaghetti, Crispy Salmon with Sicilian Sauce. P900.

Nego Pinoy Ventures: Feb. 3 (Sat) 2-5 p.m. Pinoy Waffle, Bibingka, Instant Ginataan "Bilo-bilo" includes lecture on Sales Profit Analysis. Free Business Consultation and Raffle of Kyowa appliances. P650.

Brownie Plus Baking from Prepared Mixes: Feb. 10 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Black Forest Brownie, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road, Cherry Fudge, Chocolate Praline. P 650.

Easy As Pie: Feb. 17 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Fresh Apple Pie, Walnut Pie, Caramel Meringue Pie, Chocolate Chiffon Pie and Lemon Meringue. P800.

Coffee Basic 101 (Barista Course): Feb. 17 (Sat) 2 - 6 p.m. Coverage: Coffee history, Coffee process, Trouble shooting, Coffee blend, Machine know-how-proper grinding. Techniques to perfect froth. Actual preparation of popular Traditional Hot Coffee Concoction: Espresso doppio, Cappuccino, Latte, Macchiato; Cold Coffee Concoction: Millennium Kahlua, Milano mocca & Mocca spin. Bonus: Strawberry Spin with coffee tasting & snacks. P1,500.

Kakanin: Feb. 24 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Cassava Cake, Pichi Pichi, Cuchinta, Maja Nangka, Putong Puti, Bibingkang Malagkit and Homemade Salabat. P800

Bartending: Feb. 24 (Sat) 2-6 p.m. Basic Tools, Classifications of Wine & Spirits, Types of Bar Glasses & Usage, Mixing, Serving of Cocktail Drinks including Garnishing with wine tasting & snacks. P1,500.

CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON (Limited enrollment, pre-registration required)

Waitering Basic: Feb.10 (Sat) 9 a.m.-4 p.m.Waitering Etiquette, Table Set-up, Bussing out, Napkin Folding & Skirting. P1,500.

Advance Cooking: Feb. 6-9 / 20-23 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Technical aspects of running a kitchen from setting up a system for food safety (HACCP), grand sauces, menu forms, recipe formulation / conversion, quantity cooking, portion procedures, standard serving portions, average % cost for trimmings, cooking of vegetables, fruit, shellfish & meat; costing, metric conversion factors, demonstration of the preparation of herbs based dressing, marinade, wet & dry rub. Workshop on the preparation of sauces, international menu from entree to desserts. Sample costing exercise. P5,000.

Fundamentals of Bakery Production: Feb. 6-9 / 20-23 (T-F) 2 - 6 p.m. Techniques applicable to the use of various ready mixes, yeast breads, quick breads, pies, cookies & cakes. Free Cookbook. P4,000.

Basic Culinary: Feb. 13-16 / Feb. 27-March 2 (T-F) 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Proper hygiene, sanitation & safety; nutrition & nutritional cooking; proper mis-en-place of mirepoix, stocks, soups, sauces, marinades, use of herbs & spices combinations, proper purchasing, storage, techniques of disjointing & boning poultry, filleting fish & meat fabrication. With actual preparation of dishes from appetizer, salad, eggs, pasta, seafoods, poultry & meats, dessert including garnishing for plate presentation. Free cookbook. P5,000.

Commercial Bakery Business (Advance Bakery Prod.): Feb.13-16/Feb.27-March 2 (T-F) 2- 6 p.m. Baking ingredients & their functions, baker's percentage / math, commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies, cakes, pastries & bakery products including costing, production batching with actual preparation of popular bakery products. P3,000.

COMING UP: ***Vegan Cooking and Tai Chi Class:*** March 3 (Sat) 3-6 p.m. Cooking Demo of Vegetarian Hot Pot, Pochero, Paella and Vegetarian Salmon Steaks with a 3-step Tai Chi exercise. Limited slots only. Pre-registration required. P 1,000.

For inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays thru Saturdays) at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at *mkitchen@ultimate.info.com.ph*

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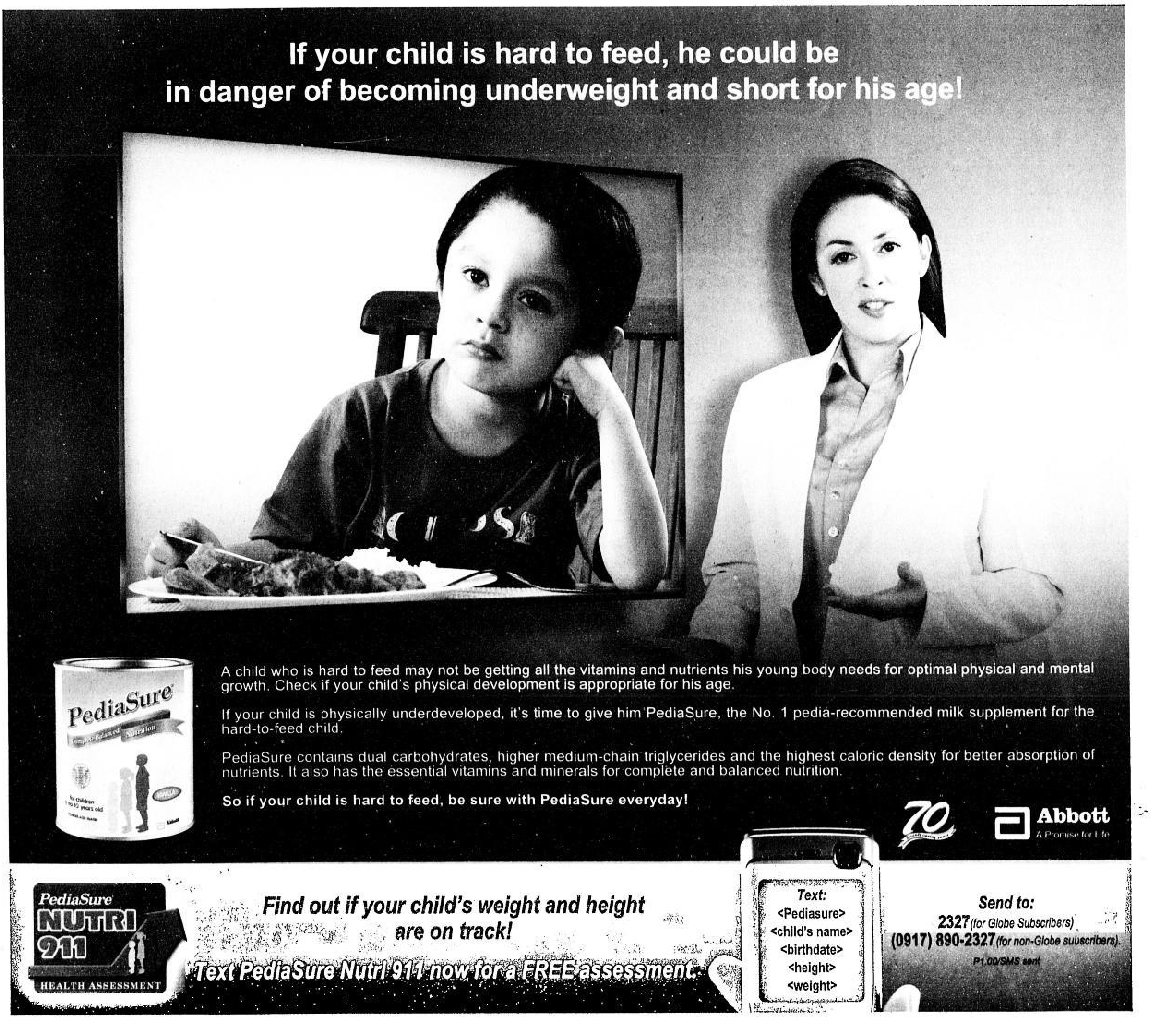

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Lani on husband Bong: Nobody's perfect

By Nini Valera

"I HAVE KNOWN [FOR QUITE A while] that he has a son by another woman," said Lani Mercado, referring to her husband, Sen. Bong Revilla.

In an exclusive interview with INQUIRER Entertainment, Lani, 38, said she and Bong just didn't talk about the boy in public.

"We want to protect the boy and his mother from intrigues. They are very private people. The mother is now married and raising her own children. This is the first and last time that I will [discuss] this."

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

Lani said she met the boy for the first time in 1998 (he is about 15 years old now), when Bong's mother died. She said the first concern was how they would tell their children.

Bong and Lani have six kids—Bryan, 20; Jolo, 18; Inah, 17; Gianna, 11; Loudette, 9; and Ram, 8.

Lani recalled: "One night, Bong gathered me and our three oldest children ... and told them about his son. They understood the situation, and have since accepted that they have another brother."

Eventually, Bong introduced the boy to the younger ones. "They now call him *kuya*," Lani said. "Ram often sends his 'kuya' text messages about computer games."

Hurt, of course

She admitted that Bong's revelation had hurt at first. "Of course, I cried. I am not made of stone. But we worked it out."

If it had remained an issue, she said, they would no longer be together. "[But] I love my family. I respect my husband. [And] he chose to stay."

Lani said she kept in touch with the boy. "In fact, I informed him through a text message when Bong was in the hospital recently."

She might have been less forgiving, she said, if Bong had told her only now. "I [believe] I was stronger when I was younger. It would really, really hurt me [now] if he had a second child by yet another woman."

Before this interview, Lani was taping for QTV 11's talk show, "Moms"—where she is one of the hosts. The subject was cheating in love.

"Our marriage is strong," she said. "I will always [work] to keep it that way. We always aim for a perfect world, but nobody's perfect."

"I WAS hurt; I'm not made of stone. But we worked it out."

LINO Cayetano and KC Concepcion on holiday before she went back to Paris.

LJ REYES JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

ALFRED VARGAS RUDY ESPERAS

KC and Lino spend time in Hong Kong

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

'Who could ask for anything more?'

GOT THIS E-MAIL AND PICTURE FROM **Kace Cayetano** (kookikace@gmail.com) dated Jan. 26. Just homonymous, not synonymous to KC (**Concepcion**), huh? Looks like **Lino Cayetano** and KC are living it up—Paris, Manila, Bora, Tagaytay and now, Hong Kong. Before KC flew back to Paris, she and Lino spent a few weeks in HK, according to the e-mail sender.

Oh, yeah! "The world will always welcome lovers as time goes by." What sweeter way to start the Valentine month than by seeing lovers whose worlds revolve around each other!

The e-mail reads: "Really good seeing KC again. She arrived Sunday and came to [HK] Disney on Monday where we ... watched 'Lion King' and the fireworks. [Met] her dad, mom ... and siblings, convinced her to [stay longer] and go ... to Dbay for dinner the following night. She did! Korean dinner, then Pacific Coffee, al fresco. Cold night sky, warm company, calming beach ... who could ask for anything more?"

KC/DS

Box office top ten

US-Canada Revenues, Jan. 26-28

Twentieth Century Fox

Rank • Film	Weekend gross (millions)	Gross to date	Weeks in release	Theaters
1. Epic Movie	$18.6	$18.6	One week	2,801
2. Smokin' Aces	$14.6	$14.6	One week	2,218
3. Night at the Museum	$9.6	$216.8	Six weeks	3,241
4. Stomp the Yard	$7.7	$50.5	Three weeks	2,115
5. Catch and Release	$7.7	$7.7	One week	1,622
6. Dreamgirls	$6.7	$86.8	Seven weeks	2,765
7. The Pursuit of Happyness	$5.0	$152.9	Seven weeks	2,688
8. Pan's Labyrinth	$4.8	$16.5	Five weeks	823
9. The Queen	$4.0	$41.3	18 weeks	1,830
10. The Hitcher	$3.6	$13.4	Two weeks	2,836

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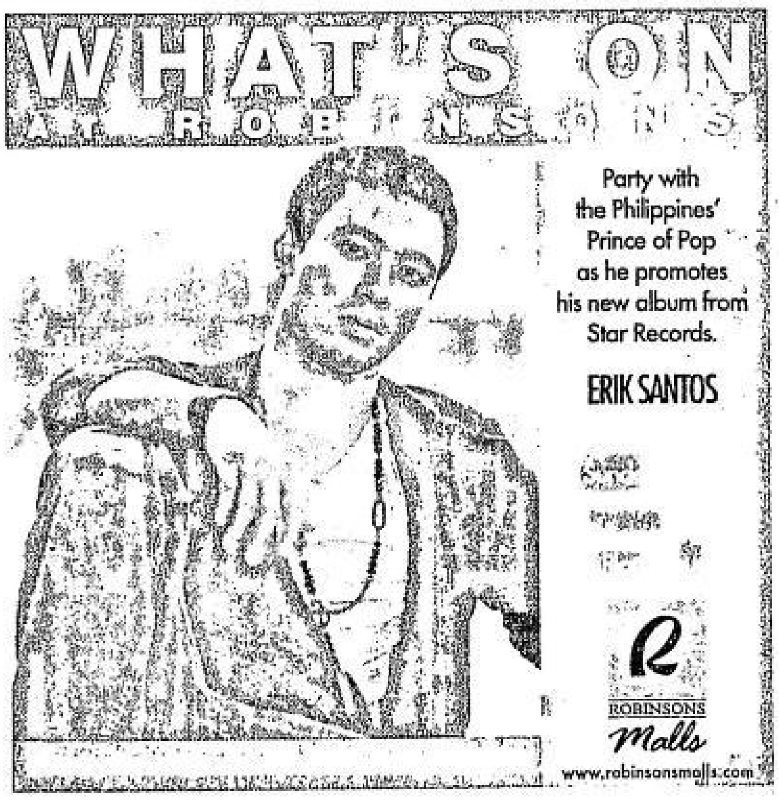
Treat your family and friends to a thrilling movie experience only at the shang.
Cinema Treats- for Cinemas 1, 2, 3, and 4
Premiere Rewards- for the Premiere Theatre
6th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 633-7851, loc. 171/170 or 633-2227
for more details.
Shangri-La Plaza



WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS
Party with the Philippines' Prince of Pop as he promotes his new album from Star Records.
ERIK SANTOS
ROBINSONS Malls
www.robinsonsmalls.com

Skin Whitening Made Easy
With Advance Miracle Whitening Cream
Fast, Safe & Effective!
The Solution for Oily Skin, Open Pores, & Pimple Marks?
with DIAMOND FACIAL LASER TREATMENT
Problems with dark lips, this is what you need!
KISSABLE LIPS FOR MEN
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New Innovative Techniques • Natural Looking
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Carlo Aquino -Actor
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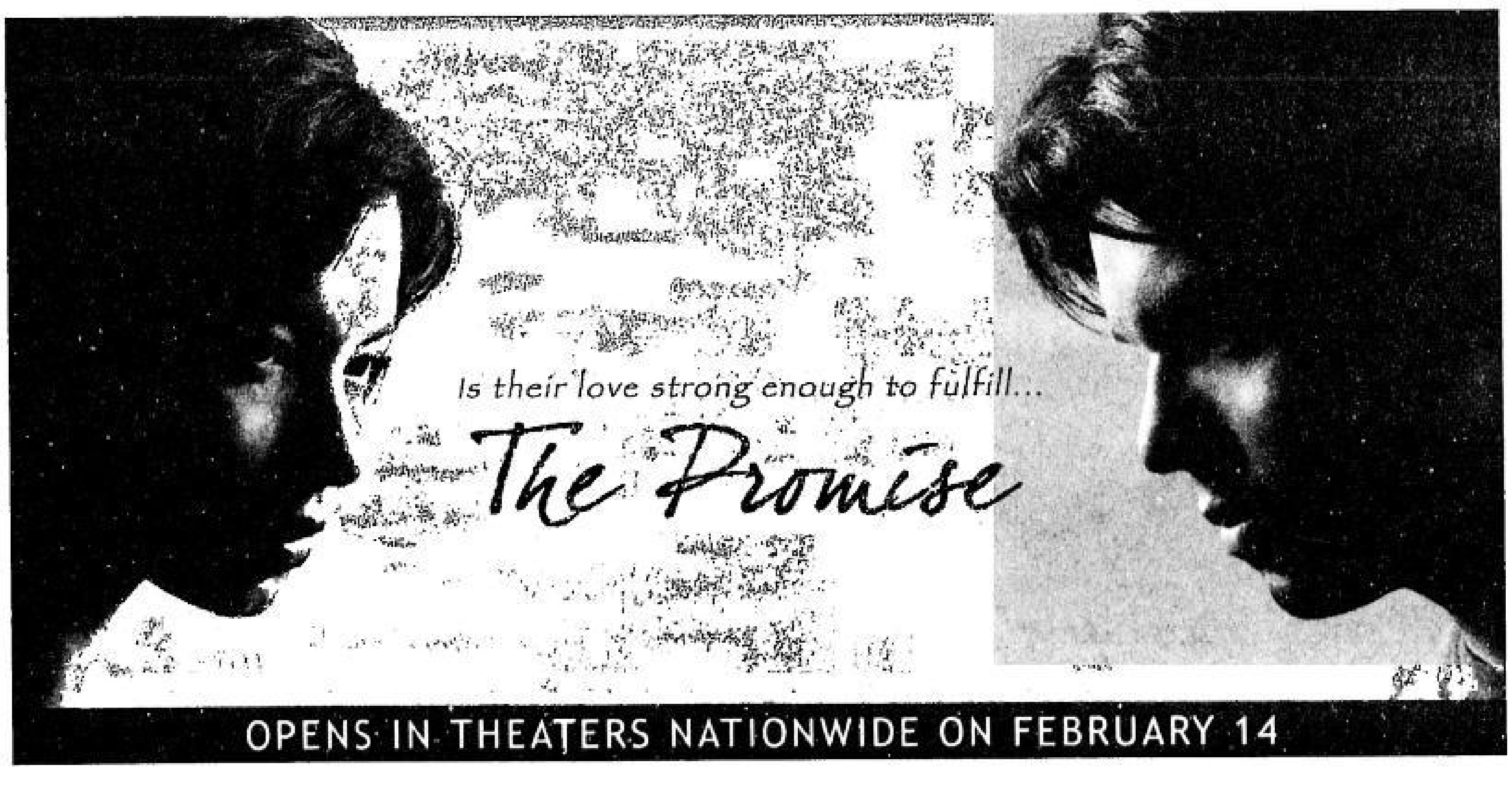
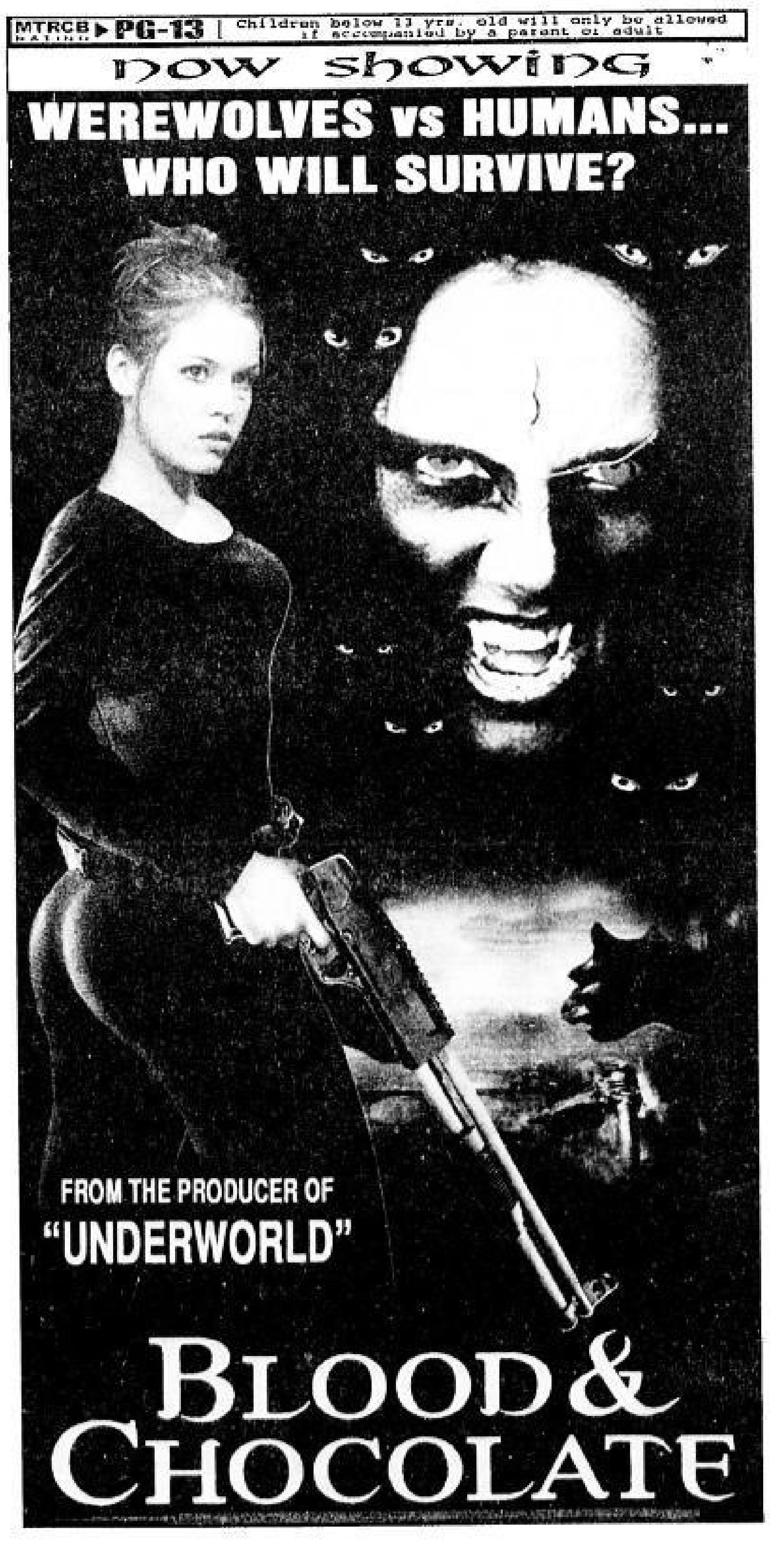


Is their love strong enough to fulfill...
The Promise
OPENS IN THEATERS NATIONWIDE ON FEBRUARY 14



MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
now showing
WEREWOLVES vs HUMANS... WHO WILL SURVIVE?
FROM THE PRODUCER OF "UNDERWORLD"
BLOOD & CHOCOLATE

CHEER FACTOR

LONDON—Sacha Baron Cohen, creator of the hit comic character Borat, has been named one of Britain's most powerful men on a list that puts him just one place behind Prince William. *Reuters*

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 APOCALYPTO
2 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE
PREVIERE
BABEL

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 APOCALYPTO
3 AGENT X 44
4 BLOOD CHOCOLATE

starmall EDSA - SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7268150
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 BLOOD CHOCOLATE
5 RESRVED

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 8433994
1 AGENT X 44
2 BLOOD CHOCOLATE
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 APOCALYPTO

THEATRES
At Pacific Mall Cabanatuan, Telephone No. (044) 600-3025
1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 AGENT X 44
3 SAW - 3

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel. (042) 660-5271
1 AGENT X 44
2 BLOOD DIAMOND
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 BABEL
2 KASAL KASALI KASALO
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4 APOCALYPTO
5 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7 BLOOD CHOCOLATE
8 SAW - 3
9 ROB-B-HOOD
10 AGENT X 44

Blue Wave MARQUINTON
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) BLOOD CHOCOLATE
2 (DOLBY) APOCALYPTO
3 (DOLBY) NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Ketann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 APOCALYPTO
3 AGENT X 44
4 BLOOD CHOCOLATE
5 LITTLE CHILDREN

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 SAW - 3
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 SUPER NOYPI
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 AGENT X 44
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 BLOOD CHOCOLATE

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 BLOOD DIAMOND

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 APOCALYPTO
3 GRIFFEN & PHOENIX
4 SHAOLIN VS' EVIL DEAD

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 AGENT X 44
2 ROB-B-HOOD

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
2 APOCALYPTO
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 AGENT X 44
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 MANO PO - 5
2 AGENT X 44
3 ERAGON

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 ZU WARRIOR
2 AGENT X 44
3 SAW - 3
4 BLOOD DIAMOND

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 AGENT X 44
3 SAW - 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 AGENT X 44
2 MATAKOT KA SA KARMA

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 ERAGON
2 KAMASUTRA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 BOGBOG SARADO
3 PARAISO SA GUBAT
4 FRAGIALE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 BOA
2 BEDROOM SECRET
3 AGENT X 44
4 BLOOD DIAMOND
5 KARIBAL

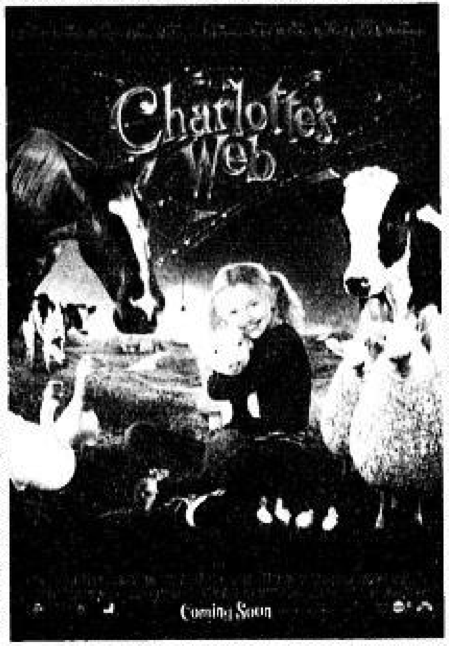
Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 FRAGILE
2 AGENT X 44
3 KARELASYON
4 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 BLOOD CHOCOLATE
2 KAMASUTRA

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SM CINEMA
SHARE A MOVIE WITH A LOVED ONE

moviettime SHOWTIME
SM DIAL-A-MOVIE 833-9999*
Your life as a movie
BIG MOVIES • BIG STARS • BIG SHOWS • BIG EVENTS



Watch how a very small pig named Wilbur find out that the most powerful force in the world is the bond of friendship with a spider named Charlotte and her web of words

Based from the best selling children's paperback by E.B White

NOW SHOWING

SM CINEMA · MALL OF ASIA CINEMAS · THE PODIUM

A united international pictures RELEASE THROUGH Solar Entertainment Corporation

MTRCB Rating: G

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104
IMAX
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3:30PM 5:50PM 8:10PM 10:30PM
Matinee Fee- P200 Primetime Fee- P250
T-REX IN 3D
11:45AM 1:00PM 2:15PM
Admission Fee- P200
1 DEJA VU
2 BLOOD DIAMOND
3 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
4 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
5 BABEL
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO/ AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
PREMIERE CINEMA
AGENT X44
CENTERSTAGE
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
CINEMA 2
CHARLOTTE'S WEB
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
2 DEJA VU
3 BLOOD DIAMOND/ AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
5 BABEL
6 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
8 AGENT X44
9 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
10 ROB-B-HOOD
11 ERAGON
12 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 BABEL
2 ERAGON
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
5 DEJA VU
6 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
7 BLOOD DIAMOND
8 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
9 AGENT X44
10 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
11 ROB-B-HOOD
12 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 DEJA VU
3 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
4 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
5 ROB-B-HOOD
6 AGENT X44
7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
8 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
9 ERAGON
10 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
11 BLOOD DIAMOND
12 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
2 ANNAPOLIS
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
5 AGENT X44
6 GRIDIRON GANG
7 ERAGON
8 ROB-B-HOOD
9 BLOOD DIAMOND
10 DEJA VU

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
3 ERAGON
4 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
5 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
6 AGENT X44

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
3 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
4 AGENT X44
5 BABEL
6 ERAGON
7 DEJA VU
8 ROB-B-HOOD
9 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
3 AGENT X44
4 ERAGON

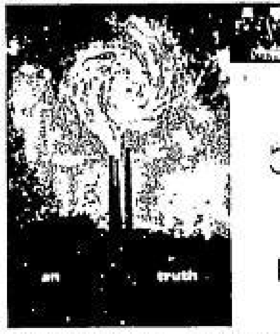
SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
4 ERAGON
5 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7 BLOOD DIAMOND
8 BABEL
9 DEJA VU
10 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
11 ROB-B-HOOD
12 AGENT X44

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS (046)4323201-04
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 SHAOLIN VS EVIL DEAD
3 AGENT X44
4 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 TENACIOUS D
3 AGENT X44
4 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 ERAGON
2 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 AGENT X44

moviettime exclusive presents



AN SM CINEMA ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGN

an inconvenient truth
A GLOBAL [redacted]

Now Showing at SM Cinema MALL OF ASIA and THE BLOCK (SM North Edsa)

LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 ERAGON
2 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
5 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
6 AGENT X44
7 ROB-B-HOOD
8 DEJA VU

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 DECK THE HALLS
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
4 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
5 AGENT X44
6 SHAOLIN VS EVIL DEAD

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
2 AGENT X44
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 8
4 SPIRIT TRAP

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 LIGALIG
3 AGENT X44
4 SHAOLIN VS EVIL DEAD

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637661-65
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
3 AGENT X44
4 DECK THE HALLS
5 SPIRIT TRAP
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO

SM CIY LIPA (043) 756-7925
1 FRAGILE
2 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
3 AGENT X44
4 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 AGENT X44
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 FEAST
4 BLOOD DIAMOND

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 AGENT X44
3 A GOOD YEAR
4 BLOOD DIAMOND

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 AGENT X44
3 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
4 TENACIOUS D

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66
1 AGENT X44
2 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 ERAGON
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
4 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
5 DEJA VU
6 KASAL, KASALI, KASALO
7 AGENT X44
8 BLOOD DIAMOND

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 RESERVED
3 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
4 AGENT X44
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
6 BLOOD DIAMOND
7 RESERVED
8 A GOOD YEAR

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 SHAOLIN VS EVIL DEAD
3 AGENT X44
4 SPIRIT TRAP
5 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
6 A GOOD YEAR

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 ERAGON
3 AGENT X44
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

moviettime PROMO

Watch and Win at SM Cinema

one, two, FREE!
Buy 2 movie tickets and get a FREE MOVIE on your next visit!
SM CINEMA

- Applicable during 3 Day Sale (Friday-Sunday) of particular mall within the promo period.
- FREE Movie pass is valid on date specified.
- Cannot be combined with other promos.
- Not valid with blocked screenings.
- One transaction only.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0366 series of 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE PG13 1:45,3:55,6:05, 8:15,10:25	**CHARLOTTE WEB G** 1:10,3:30,5:50, 8:10,10:30	**NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM G** 12:55,3:20,5:45, 8:10,10:30
BABEL PG13 1:40,4:30,7:20,10:10	**DÉJÀ VU PG13** 1:15,4:00,6:45,9:30	**APOCALYPTO R18** 1:55,4:40,7:35,10:30

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE: FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440/41
MATINNEE 110.00 FREE SEATING SCREENING BEFORE 5:00P.M. - MONDAY-FRIDAY

EASTWOOD CITY-WIDE SALE
January 31 & February 1, 2007

up to 70% discount on selected items from retail shops

Treat yourself with great discounts and exciting freebies from Eastwood City Restaurants

The perfect & grandest way to welcome year 2007!

Per DTI NCR Permit No. A3 0033 Series of 2007

Eastwood City

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

To receive Eastwood City Events, Promos and Cinema schedule just text **eastwood** and send to **2948** for Globe, Smart & Sun Cellular subscribers

For inquiries, call
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	**CHARLOTTE'S WEB** 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 G
2	**APOCALYPTO** 2:20, 5:20, 8:20, 11:10 R-18
3	**NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM** 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 G
4	**BLOOD & CHOCOLATE** 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00 PG-13

MTRCB RATING ▶ R RESTRICTED | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.

"PURE THRILL
A relentless, exhilirating, brilliantly paced action-adventure."
★★★★½
- Jim Schembri, The Age
"UNFORGETTABLE.
Mel Gibson's greatest. achievement yet."
- Urban Cinefile
"BRILLIANT. A MASTERPIECE.
The best film of the year."
- Films in Review
MEL GIBSON'S
APOCALYPTO
NO ONE CAN OUTRUN THEIR DESTINY.
www.apocalypto.com
NOW SHOWING

RUSHES

Hot couples turn up the steam at US Actors' Guild awards

AP

REUTERS

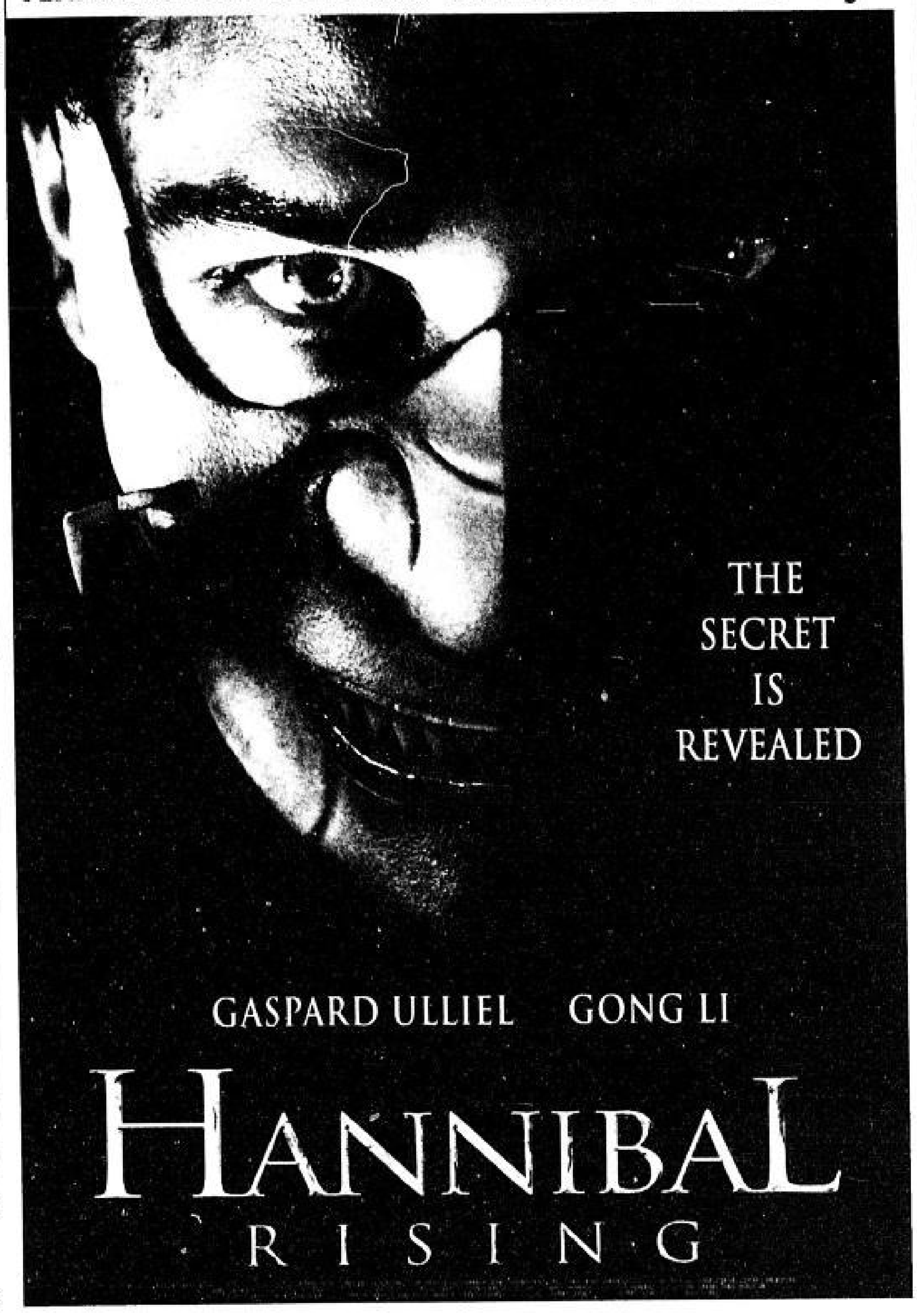
SWEET
Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore are lit up like bulbs, (left); Eva Longoria and Tony Parker, (right), can't keep their hands to themselves during the Hollywood rites.

SWEETER
Teri Hatcher and Stephen Kay upon arrival at the red carpet AFP

SWEETEST
Winner Jeremy Irons can't help himself, kisses presenter Forest Whitaker. REUTERS

OPENS FEBRUARY 7

From Bestselling Author THOMAS HARRIS comes the FINAL INSTALLMENT in the "*SILENCE OF THE LAMBS*" Saga


THE SECRET IS REVEALED
GASPARD ULLIEL
GONG LI
HANNIBAL
RISING

GREENHILLS CINEMAS

GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!

NOW SHOWING

Cinema	Movie	Schedule	Rating
1	BABEL	10:50 , 1:45 , 4:40 7:35 , 10:30	PG-13
2	BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE	11:50 , 2:10 , 4:25 6:40 , 9:00	PG-13

DOLBY DIGITAL

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!

NOW SHOWING

Cinema	Movie	Schedule	Rating
3	APOCALYPTO	10:50 , 1:40 , 4:30 7:20 , 10:10	R-18
4	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	11:40 , 2:20 , 5:00 7:40 , 10:20	GP
5	CHARLOTTE'S WEB	10:45, 1:10 , 3:30 5:50,8:10,10:30	GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

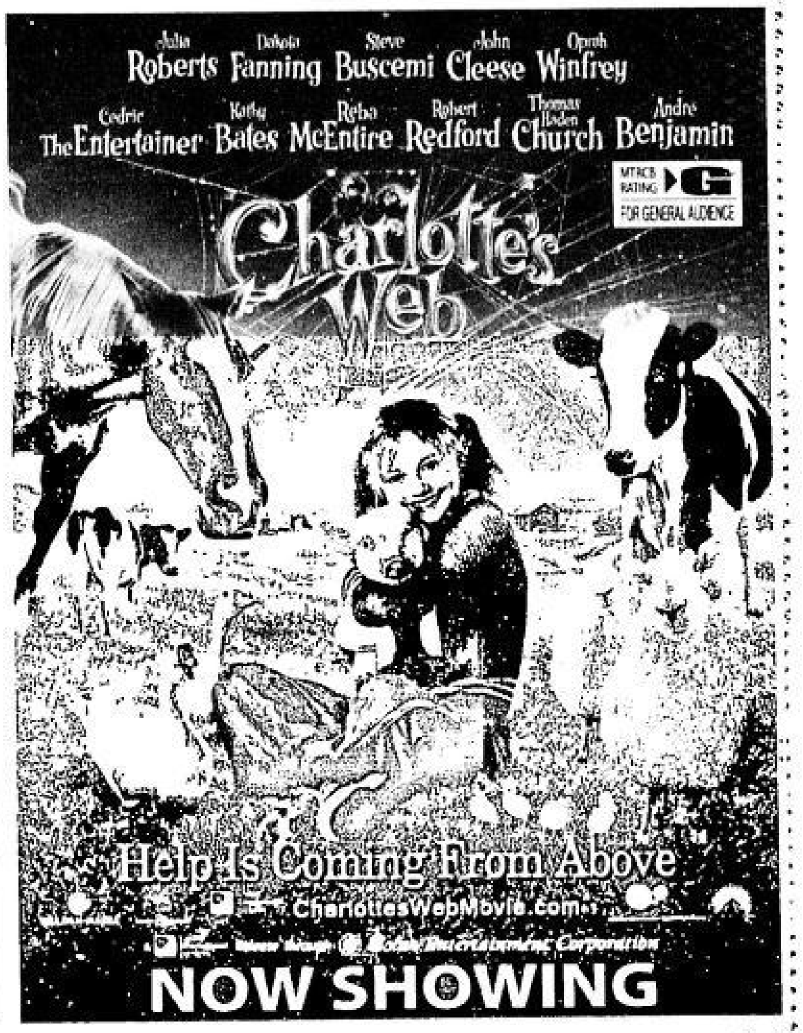
MUSIC MUSEUM

Feb. 02 & 03 , 2007	Piolo Pascual and Sam Milby	8:30 PM
Feb. 7 & 8 , 2007	Agot Isidro "Back to Basics"	8:30 PM
Feb 13 & 14 , 2007	Ogie Alcasid	8:00 PM
Feb. 16 & 17 , 2007	Passion Y Fuego	8:00 PM

TEATRINO
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00 PM
Feb. 08 & 20 , 2007	OYORDS KO PO	8:30 PM
February 11 , 2007	LOVI POE "A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION"	9:00 PM
Feb. 13 & 14 , 2007	RAYMUND LAUCHENGCO	8:30 PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635


Julia Roberts
Dakota Fanning
Steve Buscemi
John Cleese
Oprah Winfrey
Cedric The Entertainer
Kathy Bates
Reba McEntire
Robert Redford
Thomas Haden Church
Andre Benjamin
MTRCB RATING G FOR GENERAL AUDIENCE
Charlotte's Web
Help Is Coming From Above
CharlottesWebMovie.com
NOW SHOWING

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS

THX

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

G1	GLORIETTA 1	1 APOCALYPTO	2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	3 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE	4 AGENT X44
G4	GLORIETTA 4	1 CHARLOTTE'S WEB	2 BABEL	3 THX APOCALYPTO GUARANTEED SEATS	
		4 HOLLYWOODLAND	5 STRANGER THAN FICTION	6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	7 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE
GB1	GREENBELT 1	1 APOCALYPTO	2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM		
GB3	GREENBELT 3	1 THX NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX APOCALYPTO GUARANTEED SEATS		
		3 HOLLYWOODLAND GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BABEL GUARANTEED SEATS	5 CHARLOTTE'S WEB GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX APOCALYPTO GUARANTEED SEATS	2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM		
		3 CHARLOTTE'S WEB	4 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE	5 BABEL	
ACC	AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 APOCALYPTO	2 CHARLOTTE'S WEB	3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	4 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
M2	MARKET! MARKET!	1 APOCALYPTO	2 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE		
		3 CHARLOTTE'S WEB	4 AGENT X44	5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM	

At the Activity Center

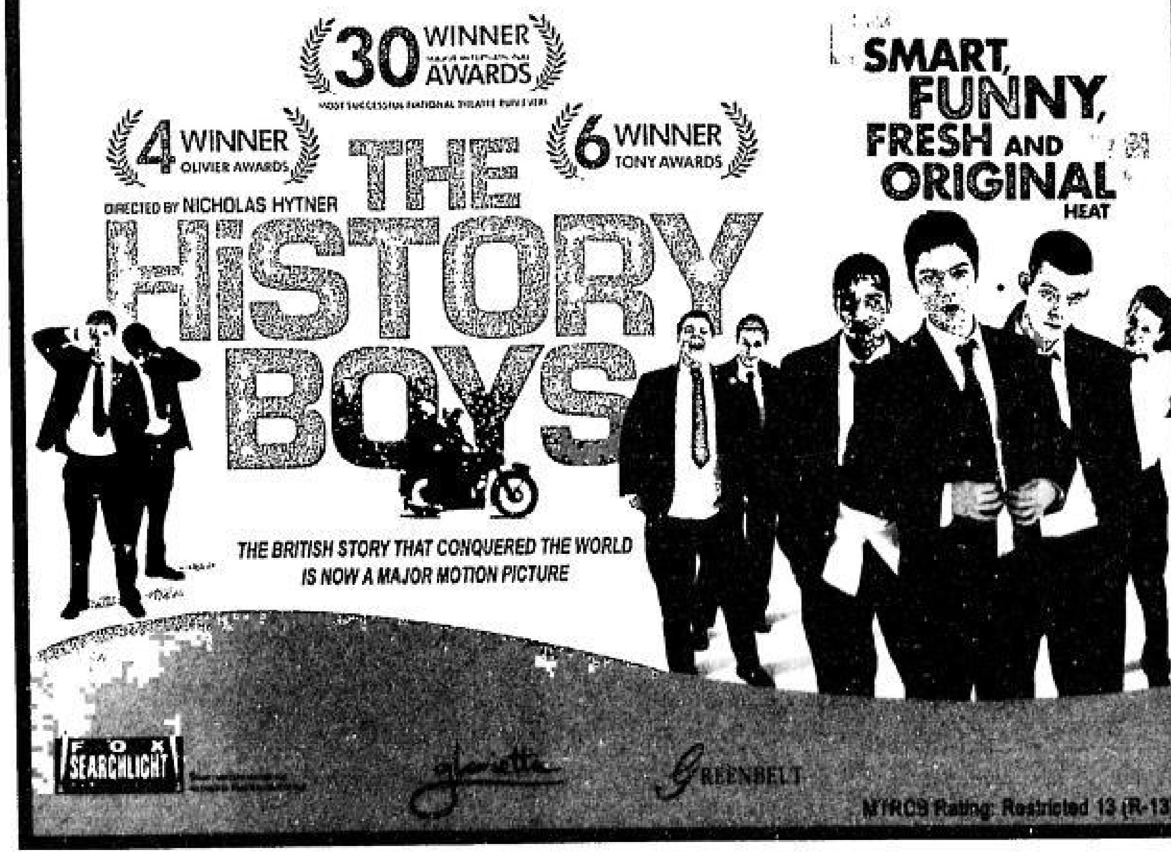
Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Photoworld Manila February 1 to 6, 2007	Celebrate the sweet life at the Town this Valentine's w/ MYMP Live! February 10, 2007
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
	Blas Ople: Job Fair February 2, 2007

GREENBELT	Greenbelt 5 Sneak Peak presents: Collection of Ana Rocha February 7 to 18, 2007
Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents SONG & DANCE at REP's Globe Theater - February 9 to March 4, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	CHINESE DIASPORA: Art Streams from the Mainland (six shows) February 15 to March 27, 2007 For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org

MEET THE BOYS WHO ARE MAKING HISTORY STARTING FEBRUARY 7 *exclusively* AT GLORIETTA 4 & GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS

Ayala Malls CINEMAS


30 WINNER AWARDS
4 WINNER OLIVIER AWARDS
6 WINNER TONY AWARDS
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HEAT
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FOX SEARCHLIGHT
glorietta
GREENBELT
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

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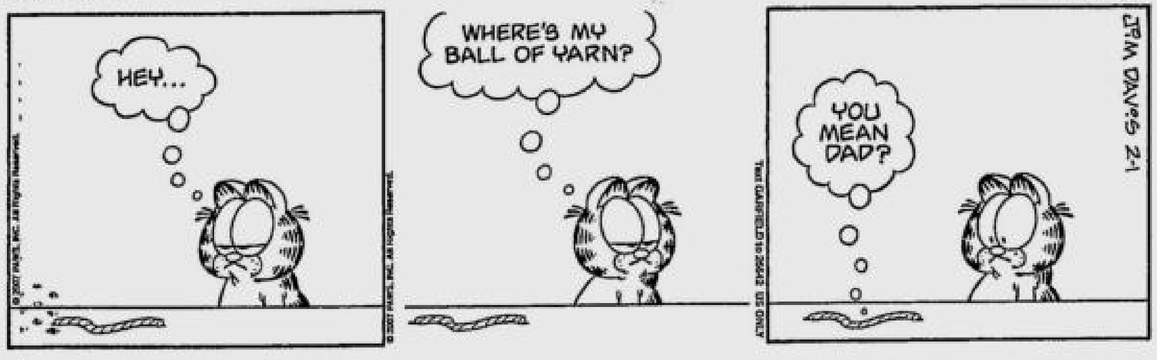
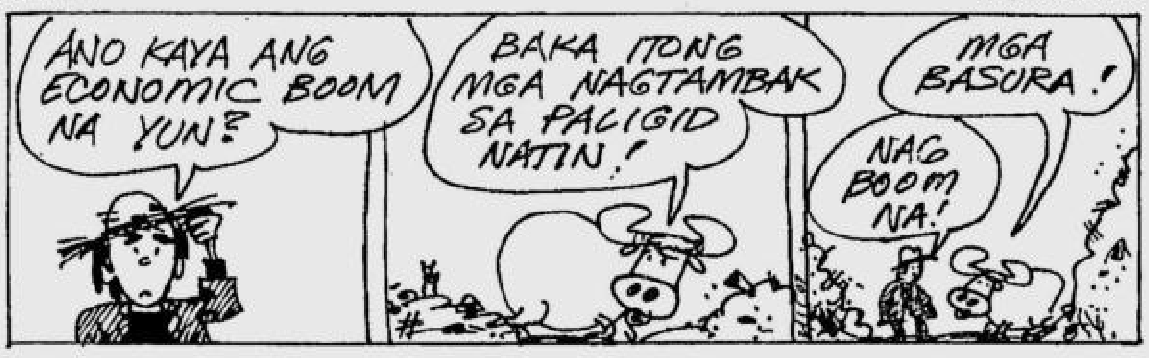
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


HEY...
WHERE'S MY BALL OF YARN?
YOU MEAN DAD?
JIM DAVIS 2-1

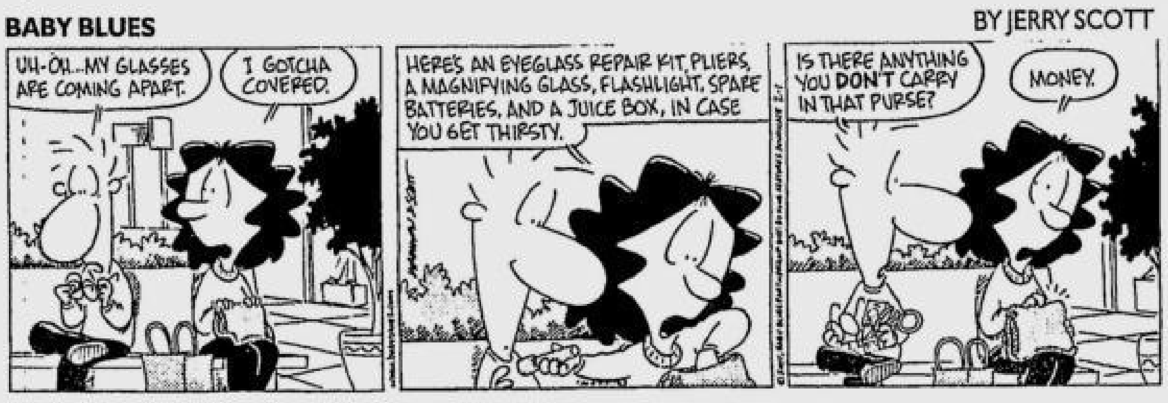
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANO KAYA ANG ECONOMIC BOOM NA YUN?
BAKA ITONG MGA NAGTAMBAK SA PALIGID NATIN!
MGA BASURA!
NAG BOOM NA!

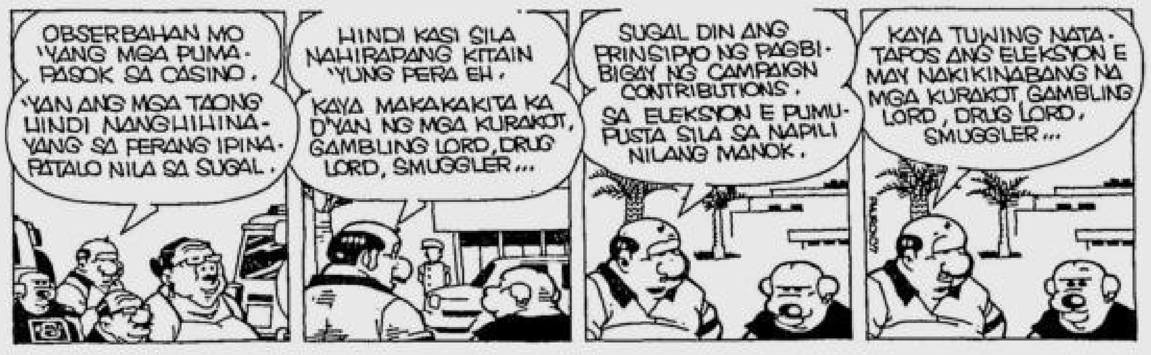
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


UH-OH...MY GLASSES ARE COMING APART.
I GOTCHA COVERED.
HERE'S AN EYEGLASS REPAIR KIT, PLIERS, A MAGNIFYING GLASS, FLASHLIGHT, SPARE BATTERIES, AND A JUICE BOX, IN CASE YOU GET THIRSTY.
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DON'T CARRY IN THAT PURSE?
MONEY.

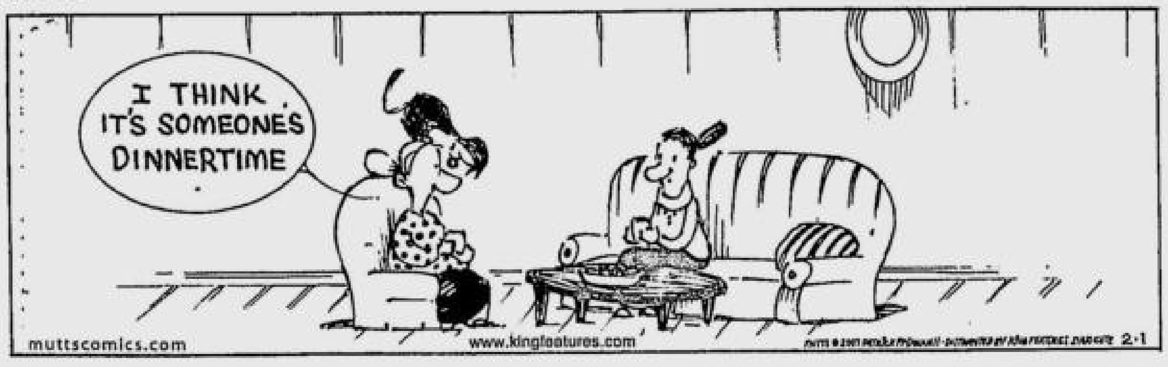
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


OBSERBAHAN MO 'YANG MGA PUMA-PASOK SA CASINO.
'YAN ANG MGA TAONG HINDI NANGHIHINA-YANG SA PERANG IPINA-PATALO NILA SA SUGAL.
HINDI KASI SILA NAHIRAPANG KITAIN 'YUNG PERA EH.
KAYA MAKAKAKITA KA D'YAN NG MGA KURAKOT, GAMBLING LORD, DRUG LORD, SMUGGLER...
SUGAL DIN ANG PRINSIPYO NG PAGBI-BIGAY NG CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS.
SA ELEKSYON E PUMU-PUSTA SILA SA NAPILI NILANG MANOK.
KAYA TUWING NATA-TAPOS ANG ELEKSYON E MAY NAKIKINABANG NA MGA KURAKOT, GAMBLING LORD, DRUG LORD, SMUGGLER...

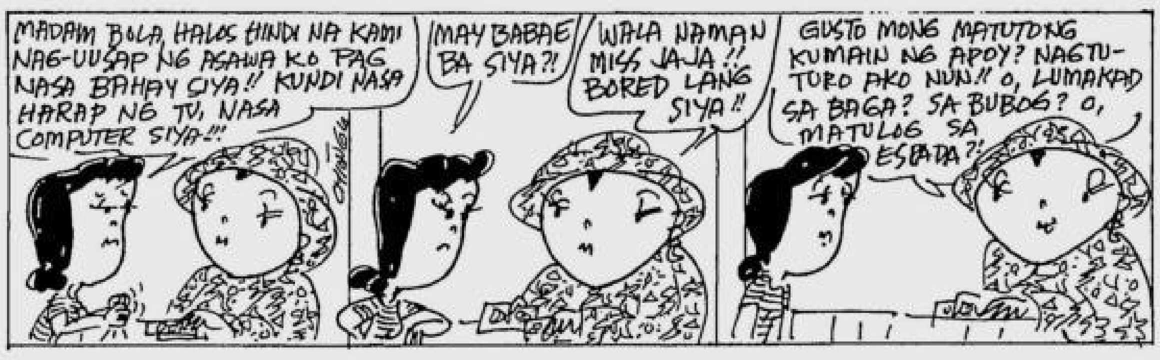
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I THINK IT'S SOMEONE'S DINNERTIME
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
2-1

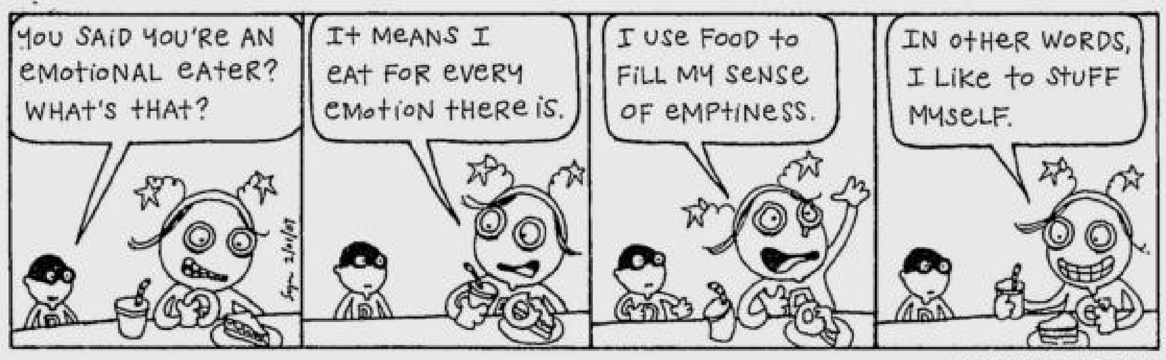
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MADAM BOLA, HALOS HINDI NA KAMI NAG-UUSAP NG ASAWA KO PAG NASA BAHAY SIYA!! KUNDI NASA HARAP NG TV, NASA COMPUTER SIYA!!!
MAY BABAE BA SIYA?!
WALA NAMAN MISS JAJA!! BORED LANG SIYA!!
GUSTO MONG MATUTONG KUMAIN NG APOY? NAGTU-TURO AKO NUN!! O, LUMAKAD SA BAGA? SA BUBOG? O, MATULOG SA ESPADA?!

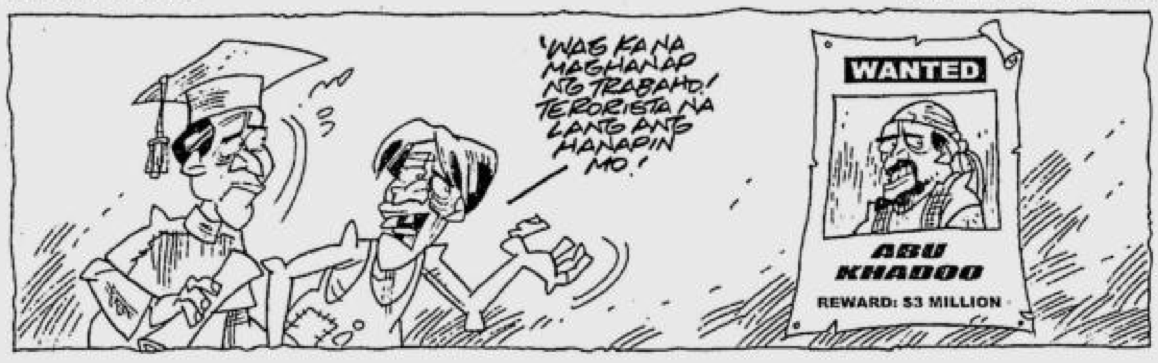
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


YOU SAID YOU'RE AN EMOTIONAL EATER? WHAT'S THAT?
IT MEANS I EAT FOR EVERY EMOTION THERE IS.
I USE FOOD TO FILL MY SENSE OF EMPTINESS.
IN OTHER WORDS, I LIKE TO STUFF MYSELF.

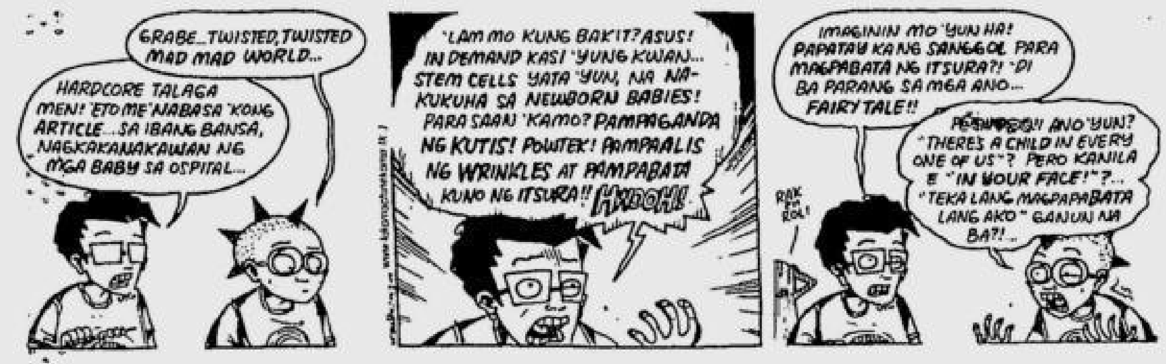
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


'WAG KA NA MAGHANAP NG TRABAHO! TERORISTA NA LANG ANG HANAPIN MO!
WANTED
ABU KHADOO
REWARD: $3 MILLION

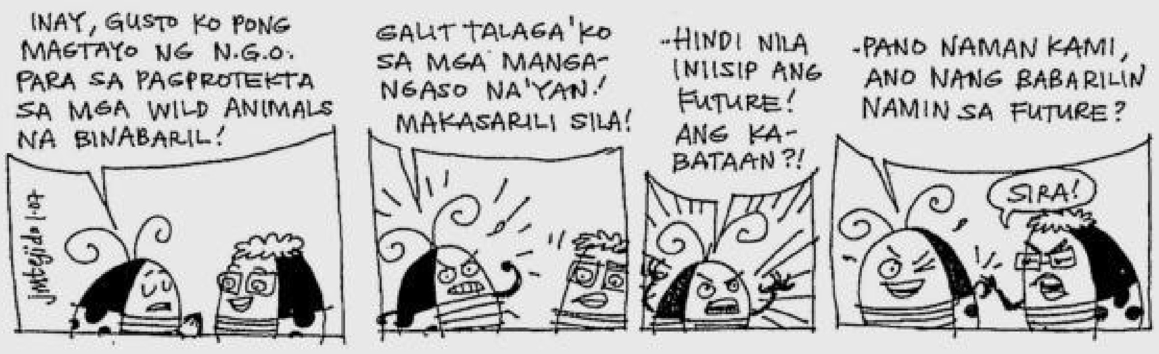
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HARDCORE TALAGA MEN! 'ETO ME' NABASA 'KONG ARTICLE...SA IBANG BANSA, NAGKAKANAKAWAN NG MGA BABY SA OSPITAL...
GRABE...TWISTED, TWISTED MAD MAD WORLD...
'LAM MO KUNG BAKIT? ASUS! IN DEMAND KASI 'YUNG KUWAN... STEM CELLS YATA 'YUN, NA NA-KUKUHA SA NEWBORN BABIES! PARA SAAN 'KAMO? PAMPAGANDA NG KUTIS! POWTEK! PAMPAALIS NG WRINKLES AT PAMPABATA KUNO NG ITSURA!! HXOOH!!
IMAGININ MO 'YUN HA! PAPATAY KA NG SANGGOL PARA MAGPABATA NG ITSURA?! 'DI BA PARANG SA MGA ANO... FAIRY TALE!!
ANO 'YUN? "THERE'S A CHILD IN EVERY ONE OF US"? PERO KANILA E "IN YOUR FACE!"?... "TEKA LANG MAGPAPABATA LANG AKO" GANUN NA BA?!..
RAK EN ROL!

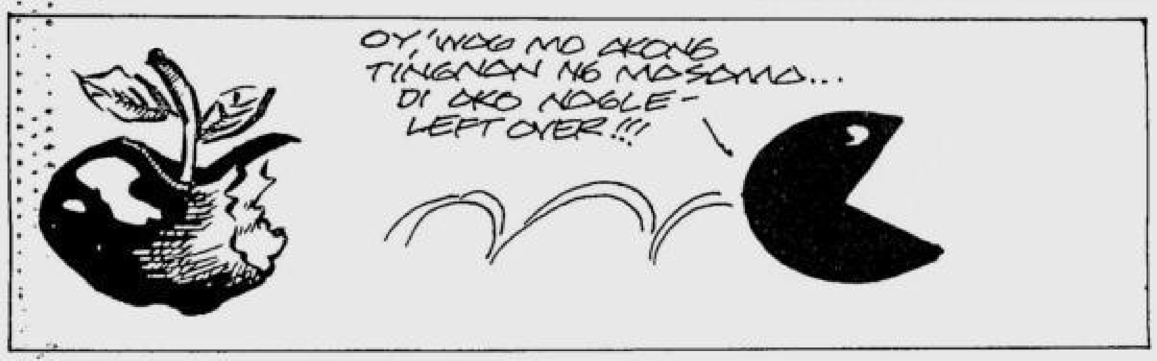
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, GUSTO KO PONG MAGTAYO NG N.G.O. PARA SA PAGPROTEKTA SA MGA WILD ANIMALS NA BINABARIL!
GALIT TALAGA 'KO SA MGA MANGA-NGASO NA'YAN! MAKASARILI SILA!
-HINDI NILA INIISIP ANG FUTURE! ANG KA-BATAAN?!
-PANO NAMAN KAMI, ANO NANG BABARILIN NAMIN SA FUTURE?
SIRA!
jmtejido 1-07

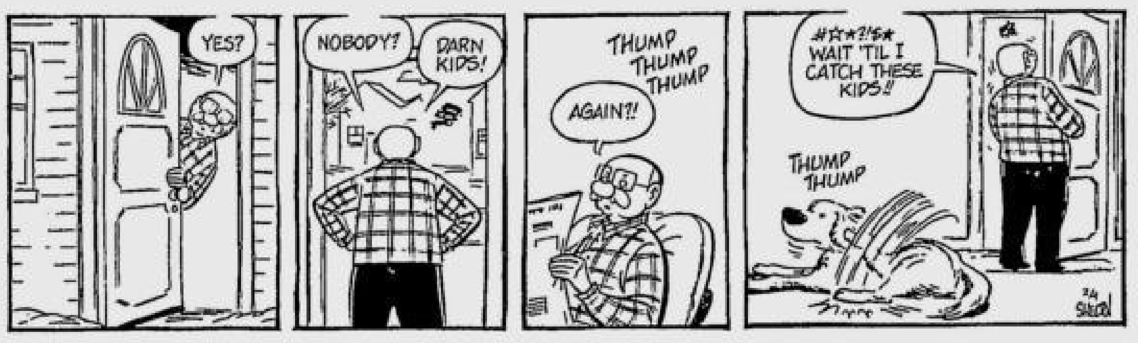
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

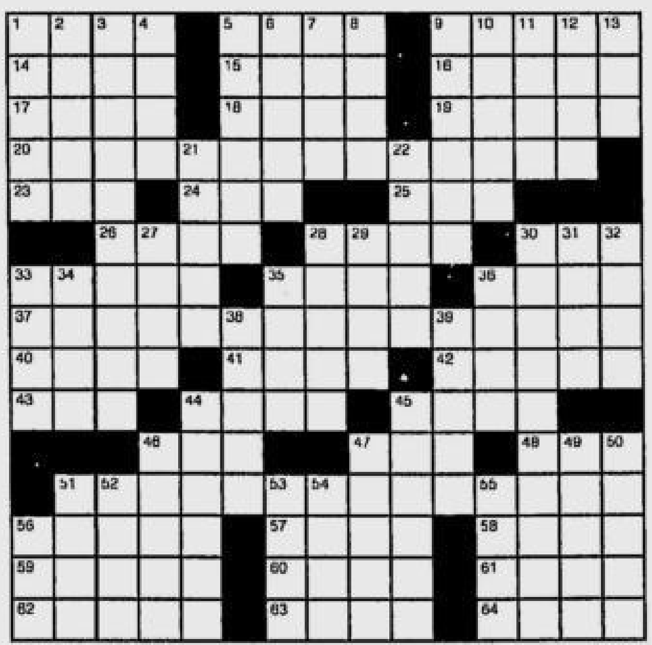

OY, 'WAG MO AKONG TINGNAN NG MASAMA... DI AKO NAGLE-LEFT OVER!!!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


YES?
NOBODY?
DARN KIDS!
THUMP THUMP THUMP
AGAIN?!
#☆*?!$★ WAIT 'TIL I CATCH THESE KIDS!!
THUMP THUMP

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Victor Fleming
Little Rock, AR

2/1/07

ACROSS
1 Body covering
5 More opposite
9 Recipe amts.
14 Actress Bancroft
15 Wheel turner
16 Foil maker
17 Ritz rival
18 Losing cause?
19 Lathered up
20 Start of a quip
23 Money on the line
24 Pick up
25 U.K. lexicon
26 Violent conflicts
28 Pathfinder's planet
30 Sun. oration
33 Worldly-wise
35 Grime
36 Projection on a basilica
37 Part 2 of quip
40 Revival cry
41 Old Peruvian ruler
42 Curving
43 Disfigure
44 Eyelid problem
45 Sioux tribe
46 Winter ailment
47 Ode preposition
48 Truck part
51 End of quip
56 Get on
57 Word before jerk or pop
58 Point after deuce
59 Postal scale unit
60 Words to a dealer
61 Begin once again
62 Chose
63 Dates
64 Slumgullion or mulligan

DOWN
1 Hindu title of respect
2 Butter cutter
3 Up the creek
4 Old Dodge model
5 Grown girls
6 Be real
7 Whole lot
8 Adam's third son
9 Small samples
10 Dracula's drink
11 Thumb through
12 "Rape of the Lock" poet
13 Utter
21 Bayou bird
22 Main artery
27 Part of AARP
28 Chop finely
29 Operatic showstopper
30 Ditsy individual
31 Latin being
32 Part of AARP
33 Grin from ear to ear
34 Tibetan VIP
35 Declare untrue
36 Bushy do of the '60s
38 Bum from
39 Alma __
44 On the schedule
45 Church instruments
46 Equivocator's perch
47 Van Halen brother
49 Word to the audience
50 At this point
51 Masterstroke
52 Search
53 Garage-sale caveat
54 Alaskan seaport
55 Supports for glasses
56 Meadow call

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	A	L	E	P	■	D	O	O	R	■	A	B	E	L
E	M	I	L	E	■	E	L	S	E	■	P	E	R	E
R	U	M	O	R	■	N	A	S	A	■	L	A	O	S
B	R	O	N	C	O	S	F	A	L	C	O	N	S	■
■	■	■	■	A	W	E	■	■	T	O	M	■	■	■
S	T	E	E	L	E	R	S	C	O	W	B	O	Y	S
P	A	D	R	E	S	■	E	A	R	L	■	A	O	L
E	S	S	E	■	■	E	L	M	■	■	S	K	U	A
E	S	E	■	C	A	R	E	■	L	U	C	E	N	T
D	O	L	P	H	I	N	S	V	I	K	I	N	G	S
■	■	■	A	A	R	■	■	E	R	R	■	■	■	■
■	P	A	T	R	I	O	T	S	E	A	G	L	E	S
H	I	V	E	■	E	G	O	S	■	I	R	A	T	E
O	M	E	N	■	S	E	R	E	■	N	I	N	O	S
D	A	R	T	■	T	E	A	L	■	E	D	E	N	S

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2/1/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're intelligent, bright, strong-willed and determined. Once you have established a goal, you will work relentlessly to achieve it. You like to be in control. Personally, you're also very sensuous and attractive. People want to be in your company. Fortunately, you remain forever young. The year ahead is social and beautifully favors relationships.

Birthdate of: Sherilyn Fenn, actress; Clark Gable, actor; Don Everly, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): The Full Moon today creates tension between romantic interests and friends. It can also create conflicts involving children. These problems will fade or disappear by the weekend.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today you're caught in the classic tug of war between the demands of home and family and the demands of career and your public life. You cannot ignore the public responsibilities you have right now.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Today's Full Moon could create a kind of distracting stress that actually makes you accident-prone. Therefore, take extra precautions and care when driving or walking.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You have to respect the values of someone else today, although these values do not reflect your own. Even though we are all more alike than not (everyone wants happiness; no one wants pain), we still have our differences.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Today's Full Moon is in Leo, making you more emotional than usual, and thereby adding extra stuff to deal with in your closest relationships. Be easy on yourself. Be easy on others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Be patient with coworkers today. Expect increased stress at work because of today's Full Moon. Many of the problems you have now will greatly diminish by the weekend.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Too often you try to please everyone. Today this will be too difficult. Children, romantic interests, friends and groups all want a piece of you! You'll have to choose.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Despite the demands of your outer world, focus on home and family if you can today. Family members or domestic conditions demand this now.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Talk to siblings and neighbors. Stay current with reading, writing and studying. This insane busy period quiets down by the weekend. (Whew!)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Continue your efforts to spend and earn money. You're definitely focused on finances now. Today's Full Moon might create a few speed bumps—no big deal.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Three planets are in your sign, and the Full Moon directly opposes you. This creates stress in your closest relationships. Be patient with others. Things will improve after the Moon peaks.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Some days are easier than others. Factoid: Today's Full Moon creates a few hurdles at work, largely because it makes you doubt yourself. Gone in 48 hours!

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

				1				7
				7				4
		9			8		2	
		8			7		3	
		2				1		
	6		4			2		
	7		6			5		
5				4				
1				3				

Difficulty Level ★★★

2/01

©2007 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	3	6	2	5	9	8	1	7
5	7	8	4	1	3	9	2	6
9	2	1	8	7	6	4	5	3
6	8	5	9	3	2	1	7	4
2	9	7	1	6	4	5	3	8
1	4	3	5	8	7	2	6	9
7	1	4	6	9	5	3	8	2
8	6	9	3	2	1	7	4	5
3	5	2	7	4	8	6	9	1

Difficulty Level ★★★

RODEL ROTONI

KIM CHUI

KC and Lino …

From page D1

Damage control

I was swamped with e-mail and text messages about my column on **Bong Revilla's** love child, **Luigi**, with my friend **L.G.** But I heard nothing from Bong. At this point, silence may be his best defense. Politics has truly taught him much about damage control.

(**Lani** has something to say, though. See story on page D1.—Ed.)

Cool-off season

Seems it's cool-off season for celeb couples. **Alfred Vargas** and **LJ Reyes, Polo Ravales** and **Ara Mina, Marvin Agustin** and **Pauleen Luna** all claim their relationships are in a state of limbo. "Lack of time," they all say. Ain't it sad that they spend money the way they want to, but can't spend time as their hearts please?

Money well-spent is not the same as time well-spent. What's keeping them busy is not necessarily what's keeping them happy.

'Feb-ibig'

For V-day, ABS-CBN cooked up "Feb-ibig," a collection of *kilig*-packed programs. "Your Song" presents these ValenTEAMS:

Kim Chui and **Gerald Anderson** in Nina's "Someday"; **John Prats, Heart Evangelista** in MYMP's "With You"; **Sarah Geronimo, Carlo Aquino** in Sarah's "Carry My Love"; **Ryan Agoncillo, Judy Ann Santos** in "Let Me Say I Love You in a Song"; **Diether Ocampo, Kristine Hermosa, Precious Lara Quigaman** in "Click na Click."

Hearts will stay aflutter with "Da Adventures of Pedro Penduko" as the Pedro (**Matt Evans**)-Raquel (**Olyn Meimban**)- Hiyas (**Melissa Ricks**) love triangle gets even hotter.

Sparks didn't fly on the set between exlovers John and Heart. "Steady *lang kami* during the shoot," John says. He and his GF of five months (**Miakka Lim**) plan to spend V-day in Bora.

As for Diet, he never plans his Valentine. "I like things spontaneous," he says. "Just go with the flow."

Love is in the air and *on* the air every weekend starting Feb 3.

Med boy

John Lloyd Cruz is elated that he's endorsing Unilab's Paracetamol Biogesic. Loydie says, "It comes in handy, *sa dami ng* headaches that show biz brings!"

What about heartaches? He laughs. "My heart has never been better. My GF (**Liz Uy**) keeps me grounded." Just as he admonishes everyone to stay safe with his extro line, "Ingat!" in the ad, Loydie is really cautious when it comes to matters of the heart.

E-mail wateringhole-shangrila@yahoo.com.

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BABEL 12:20 / 3:20 / 6:20 / 9:20	CHARLOTTE'S WEB 12:00 / 2:20 / 4:40 / 7:00 / 9:20	BLOOD & CHOCOLATE 12:50 / 3:05 / 5:20 / 7:35 / 9:50	
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 11:50 / 2:20 / 4:50 / 7:20 / 9:50	AGENT X-44 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	SAW 3 1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50	APOCALYPTO 12:00 / 3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00

Ali MALL 5

1 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE 12:05 R3 / 1:40 / 3:55 / 6:10 / 8:25	2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 1:00 / 3:30 / 6:00 / 8:30	3 APOCALYPTO 12:10 R5 / 1:50 / 4:50 / 7:50
4 LITTLE CHILDREN 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00	5 AGENT X-44 11:55 / 2:05 / 4:15 / 6:25 / 8:35	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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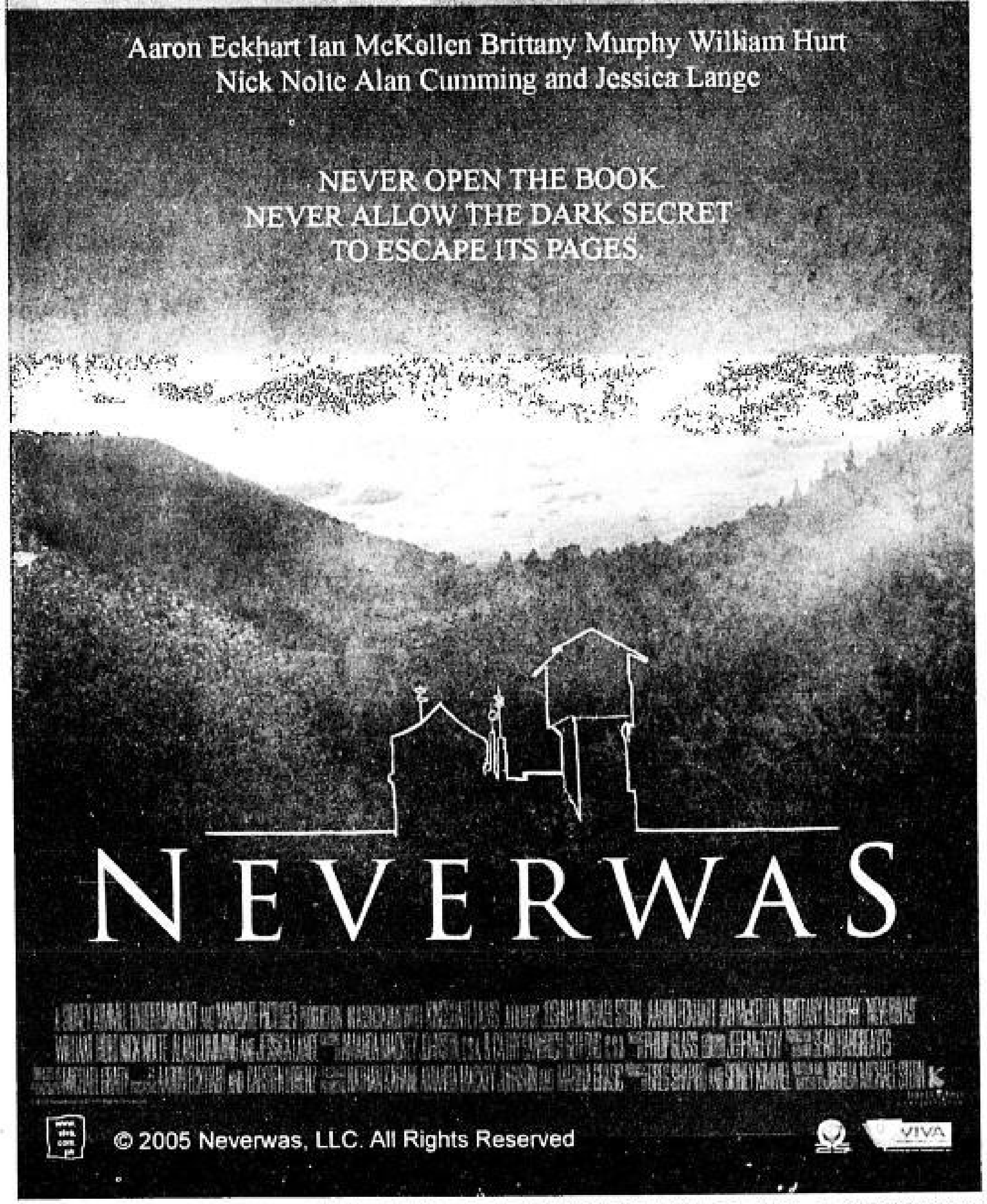
Gateway CINEPLEX*10


Aaron Eckhart Ian McKellen Brittany Murphy William Hurt
Nick Nolte Alan Cumming and Jessica Lange
NEVER OPEN THE BOOK.
NEVER ALLOW THE DARK SECRET
TO ESCAPE ITS PAGES.
NEVERWAS
VIVA

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Araneta Center

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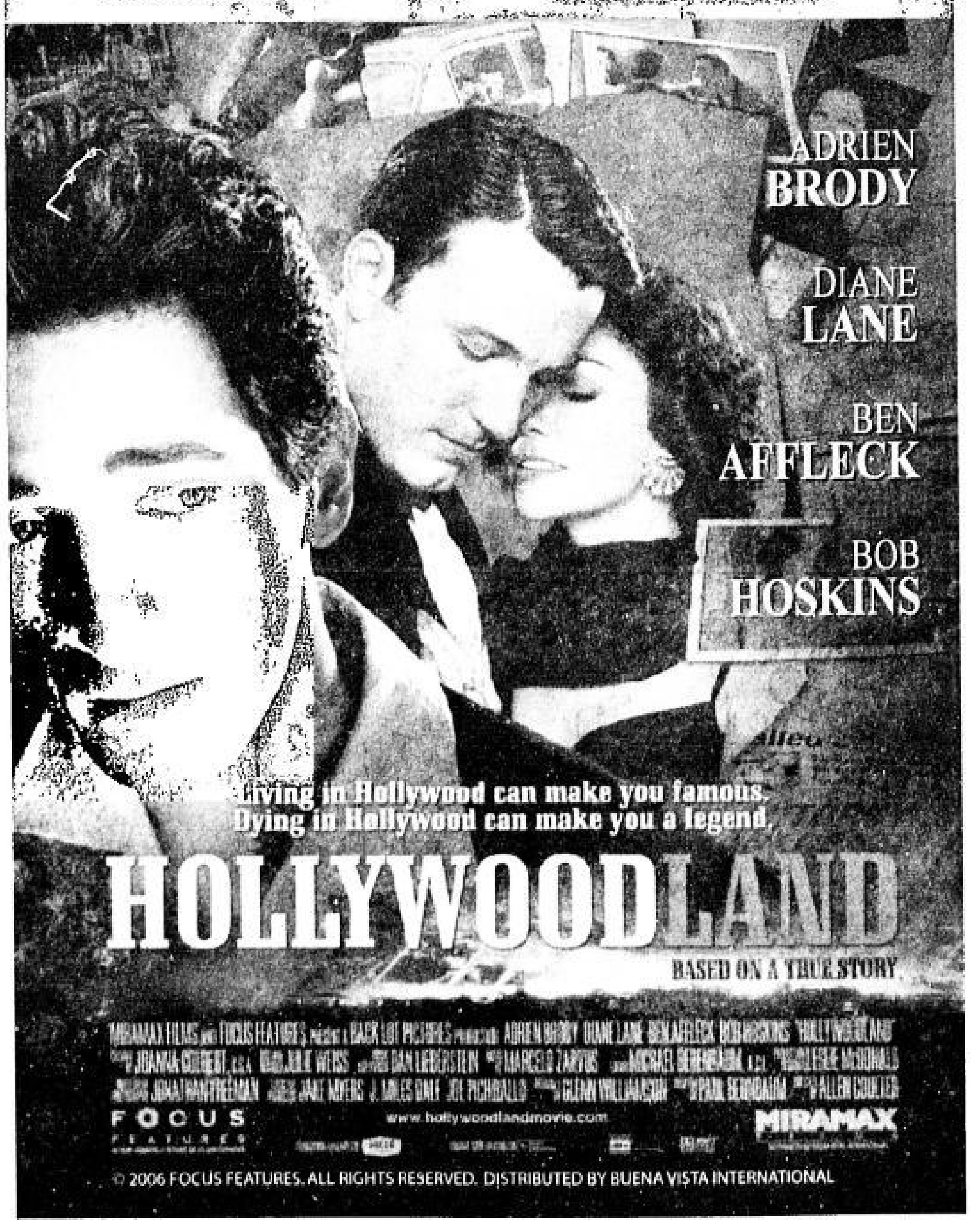
Enjoy Movie-Going Like No Other

limited special screenings at

Gateway CINEPLEX*10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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM • THX
2 APOCALYPTO
3 indieSine: ICU BED #7
4 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
5 BABEL
6 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
7 AGENT X44
8 DEJA VU
9 SAW 3
10 LITTLE CHILDREN

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
2 LITTLE CHILDREN
3 AGENT X44
4 BABEL
5 APOCALYPTO
6 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
7 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
3 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
4 APOCALYPTO
5 LITTLE CHILDREN
6 AGENT X44
7 ROB-B-HOOD
8 SAW 3

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
3 APOCALYPTO
4 CHARLOTTE'S WEB

PIONEER 687-6378

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
3 APOCALYPTO
4 CHARLOTTE'S WEB

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MTRCB Rating: R18

january 24 - 30

Set in the minefields of modern suburbia, this film follows several inhabitants of a small American town as they fumble their way through adulthood. Numb-to-life housewife and mother Sarah Pierce (Kate Winslet) finds an outlet for her yearning in gorgeous househusband Brad Adamson (Patrick Wilson), who is crippled with insecurity over the fact that his perfect wife, Kathy (Jennifer Connely) is the family breadwinner.

When Sarah and Brad meet at the local playground one afternoon, a passionate affair is sparked. In a further attempt to reclaim his youthful fire, Brad joins a night football league with Larry Hedges (Noah Emmerich), a former cop who has begun to harass a convicted sex offender, Ronnie J. McGorvey (Jackie Earle Haley). The trouble lives eventually collide, causing each individual to take full responsibility for their not-so-responsible actions. It is bitingly funny and nakedly honest critique of middle class dysfunction.

For Screening Schedule, please contact our Cinema Access: 635-5555 or visit us: www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

3 GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINATIONS
BEST PICTURE
BEST ACTRESS BEST SCREENPLAY
SAN FRANCISCO FILM CRITICS CIRCLE
BEST PICTURE
Little Children
Kate Winslet
Jennifer Connelly
Patrick Wilson

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 FRAGILE
3 BLOOD DIAMOND
4 AGENT X44

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 GRIFFIN and PHOENIX
2 FRAGILE
3 AGENT X44
4 DECK THE HALLS

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 APOCALYPTO
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 AGENT X44
4 ARTHUR and the INVISIBLES

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 DECK THE HALLS
2 APOCALYPTO
3 AGENT X44
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 APOCALYPTO
3 AGENT X44
4 SHAOLIN vs. EVIL DEAD 2

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5278

1 DECK THE HALLS
2 AGENT X44
3 SPIRIT TRAP
4 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
5 APOCALYPTO
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 ROB-B-HOOD
4 A GOOD YEAR
5 FEAST
6 AGENT X44

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5 AGENT X44
6 GRIFFIN AND PHOENIX

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Perfect Gift
All Year Round

A Pre Paid Movie Pass to the Hottest Seats in town.

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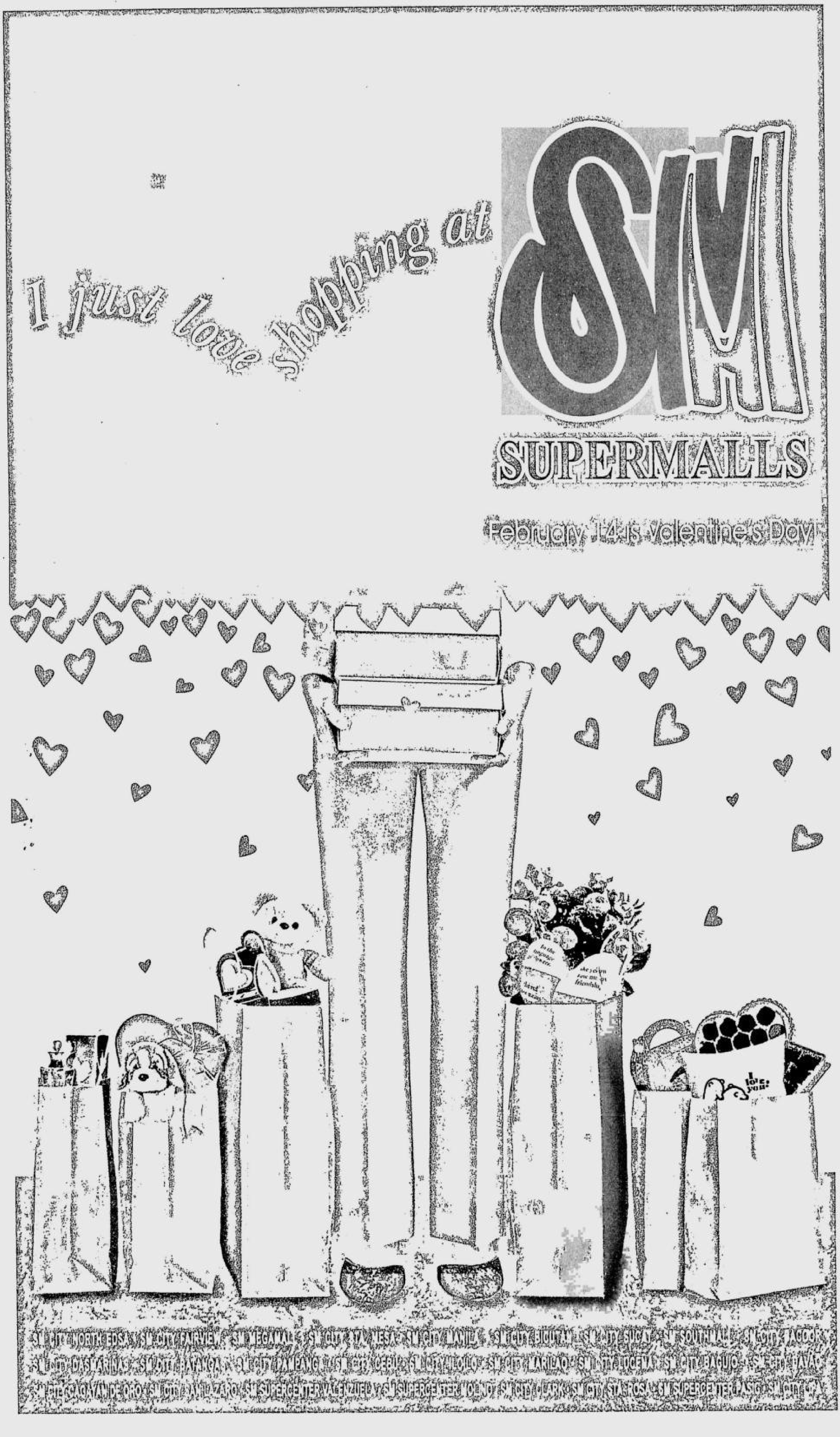
For marketing and events/reservations please call: Marketing Services Department at 395-2188 locs. 230 and 240

Celebrate the Season of hearts at SM Supermalls

SM Supermalls' love affair with its shoppers has grown stronger through the years. This Valentine season, families visit their neighborhood SM Supermalls and enjoy the many pleasures of shopping and eating out specially lined up for them.

SM Supermalls has fashioned an exciting repertoire of events that celebrate its continuing romance with millions of Filipino mallers. Among the Valentine offerings are dating games, souvenir photo opportunities, Valentine make-over sessions and musical presentations.


I just love shopping at
SM
SUPERMALLS
February 14 is Valentine's Day!
SM City North Edsa • SM City Fairview • SM Megamall • SM City Sta. Mesa • SM City Manila • SM City Bicutan • SM City Sucat • SM Southmall • SM City Bacoor
SM City Dasmariñas • SM City Batangas • SM City Pampanga • SM City Cebu • SM City Iloilo • SM City Marilao • SM City Lucena • SM City Baguio • SM City Davao
SM City Cagayan de Oro • SM City San Lazaro • SM Supercenter Valenzuela • SM Supercenter Molino • SM City Clark • SM City Sta. Rosa • SM Supercenter Pasig • SM City

Calendar of Events

METRO MANILA

"Three for Love"
A Valentine concert series, featuring the members of the Philippine Opera Company (Karla Gutierrez, Ana Feleo and Bimbo Cerrudo)

SM Southmall Feb. 11
SM Megamall Feb. 12
SM City Manila Feb. 13
The Block at SM City North Edsa Feb. 15

"Fevrier Aventure Amoureuse"
A February love affair

The Block at SM City North Edsa Feb. 7 - 14

"Megalucky in Love"
Luxurious giveaway items for the celebrants

SM Megamall Feb. 11 - 16

"Vanity Fair"
A Valentine make-over

SM City Manila Feb. 11 - 16

"Picture Perfect Moments"
Photo-op for the shoppers

SM City Bicutan Feb. 9 - 14

VALENTINE CONCERTS

February 14
Nikki Gil SM City Cebu
Love Duets SM City Iloilo
Bossa Nova SM City Davao
TJ Trinidad SM City Cagayan de Oro

February 10
Iloilo Youth SM City Iloilo

VALENTINE CONTESTS

Ultimate Love Affair
Singing Contest
SM City Cebu Feb. 11

Strings@Home
The 2nd Home Radio Acoustic Competition
SM City Iloilo Feb. 12

Campus Radio
2Gether Again Contest
Valentine Dating Game
SM City Cagayan de Oro Feb. 13

PROVINCIAL LUZON

"All Friday Love Chill"
SM City Lipa Feb. 2, 9 & 23

Himig Pag-ibig
SM City Lucena Feb. 4

Sheryn Regis
SM City Lucena Feb. 10

***Pedro Penduko*'s**
Matt Evans & Melissa Ricks
SM City Batangas Feb. 14

Me & My Valentine
SM City Dasmariñas Feb 12-14

Love is in the Air
SM City Clark Feb. 13 & 15

Day of Romance Serenade
SM City Clark Feb. 14

Valentine with Gerald Santos
SM City Pampanga Feb. 4

Stop, Dine & Fall in Love
Valentine Serenade
SM City Pampanga Feb. 14 - 15

Valentine Acoustic Soiree
SM City Pampanga Feb. 14

Laugh Your Heart Out
SM City Pampanga Feb. 17

Sonare String Ensemble
SM City Marilao Feb. 14

Especially for You
SM Supercenter Molino Feb. 14

Rythm & Jazz
SM Supercenter Molino Feb. 9-10

A Night with Hale
SM City Sta. Rosa Feb. 11

Love Sirens **with Nina & Sitti**
SM City Sta. Rosa Feb. 18 & 24

Valentine Dating Game
SM City Lucena Feb. 11
SM City Marilao Feb. 10
SM City Pampanga Feb. 10
SM City Clark Feb. 10
SM City Lipa Feb. 13-14
SM City Dasmariñas Feb. 16